

Halo The Evolution Continues

by UNSpaceCommand

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Summary: First time Crossover. Constructive Critic welcome. Enjoy and pls Review. Chapter 27 is up. A long lost ship is returning home but it seems fate have a decision to make a mess of things. Looking for Beta Reader.

1. Chapter 1

P.S. I do not own Halo nor Mass Effect.

Chapter1

UNSC Modified Colony ship Spirit of Fire

Unknown star system, 2563, September, 19th

Thirty-two years after the escape from the Forerunner shield world.

The sensors of the Spirit of Fire blinked as it transmitted sensor readouts to the ship's AI, known to the crew as Serina. The AI stirred from her standby mode and started a series of more complex scans with the advanced sensors lining the hull of the modified colony ship. The results puzzled her as the data readout did not match any of her databases. She hissed silently as her protocol directory pestered her to wake up the commanding officer of the ship as it decided that Captain Cutter would know how to deal with the situation. Even as she sent the wake up command to the cryo tubes, she puffed the docking thruster of the ship, redirecting its course to avoid putting the damaged vessel in danger. She winced slightly as the starboard side hull of the Phoenix class ship groaned in protest to the thrusters' firing.

"Captain, something just happened." Said Serina calmly as the man with salt and pepper hair got up from the cryotube. Cursing at the med of the cryopod, the captain got dressed and started towards the door.

Sighing slightly, Captain Cutter asked, "Ship status, Serina?" as he palmed the keypad on the wall beside the door.

"Main engines operable at 82 percent efficiency, 40 percent of our point defense turrets are undergoing repairs, Archer missile pods depleted by 20 percent, the Magnetic Accelerator Cannon is currently undergoing system checks, and will be operational in a few minutes." Said Serina, pausing to imitate the taking of a breath before continuing, "However, something interesting has happened that requires your attention on the bridge. Sir."

The Captain punched the button for the command elevator before replying, "No MAC, that's not something I like hearing in the morning, Serina."

Grimacing slightly as he felt a few muscles in his body contract suddenly, commonly known as 'freezer burns' by the ground pounding Marines.

"What's the status of Dr Anders?" Asked the captain as he tried to ignore the pain."

"She is currently in the observation deck, examining the sensor readout on the unknown object we are currently orbiting."

"Something tells me I'm not gonna like this," Said the Captain as he stepped into the Spirit's bridge.

"Just in case, sound general quarters. And Serina?" said the captain as he settled into his command chair.

"Yes, captain?"

"Wake the Spartans from their Icenap."

"Aye, Aye sir."

The captain then scanned his bridge officers before calling up the main view screen. The object in question was big, almost as large as 15 Marathon class Cruisers lined up. It had two arm like extensions with a pair of rings at the back of the object.

"Serina what is that? Is there any threat to this ship?" asked Captain Cutter suddenly.

"Unknown origin. Life sign detectors aren't picking anything up. However sir, you might be more interested in this." Said Serina as she waved her hand over the main view screen.

The image of the unknown object faded and was replaced with a new image... one that jolted Captain Cutter to full alert ... a Forerunner Keyship.

"Have Dr Anders escorted to bridge immediately." whispered Captain Cutter.

Dr Anders stepped onto the bridge reading her datapad, even as the marine escort beside her stood at attention. She quickly marched up to the captain, and greeted him with a nod.

"Captain, that ship may not only be our ticket home, but a treasure trove of technology that may help us win this war." said the doctor as she manipulated the view screen to display data from her datapad.

"I'm well aware of that, doctor. However, I need to place the safety of this ship and its crew first before anything else. I'll arrange for a boarding party to clear the ship first."

Dr Anders nodded in understanding. "If possible I would like to follow the boarding party in."

The captain seemed to consider it before reluctantly agreeing. "Very well. Lieutenant Sanders, ready your company."

A marine that was part of Dr Anders escort team nodded and exited the bridge.

"Now Doctor, what about the strange object?" Prompted the captain as he turned back towards the tactical projector. A 3D image of the object sprung up and began rotating as the captain leaned forward to examine it more closely.

"I have no idea captain," replied Anders as she stepped up to the projector and began to manipulate the controls. After a while, the image stopped rotating and zoomed in.

"The material itself is a mystery. Based on what I can speculate from the atomic analysis, the material is made of a complex and very dense metal alloy capable of withstanding tremendous force before being scratched."

Anders paused slightly to take a breath, while Serina interrupted.

"Sensors also show a gravitational anomaly in the middle of the two rings." Glaring at the ship's AI, Anders continued her briefing.

"In addition the alloy does not match any known material. Forerunner or Covenant".

The Captain seemed to register this and remained silent, deep in thought.

"First things first, we need to take that Forerunner warship to get home. The R&D eggheads in ONI can crawl all over it for all I care. If there's nothing more, dismissed."

Anders nodded before returning to her lab. As she walked off the bridge, Serina remarked, "She has been different since the Shield world."

The Captain sighed as he stared out the armored windows.

"We all have, Serina"

"All boarding personnel please report to your Stations, this is not a drill, I repeat this is not a drill." Announced Serina through the ships intercom system even as wary marines gathered in the hanger

bays, including a platoon of ODSTs that quickly strapped themselves into four of the waiting Pelican Dropships.

"Alright listen up, the captain wants a new ship, so we're going in with the regulars. Keep your finger on the trigger and we'll all go home in one piece, am I right marines?" Yelled the ODST CO.

"Hoo-rah!" answered his helljumpers.

"Alright boys and girls, what's our motto?" Yelled the CO.

"Feet first into hell, sir!" replied his troops.

"Damn right you are. Check your gears, we move out as soon as the jarheads over there are ready."

The Marines outside glared at the ODST CO while the rest of the helljumper platoon grinned. Just then, a marine sergeant shouted. "Officer on deck!"

As Lieutenant Sanders entered the hanger bays, he said "At ease men, the captain wants us to board and secure the forerunner vessel in hope of using its slipspace engine to get us home. We don't know what's waiting for us in the depth of the vessel, so I want you armed to the teeth and ready for a fight. Am I clear marines! ?"

As one the Marines in the hanger shouted back their reply "Crystal, Sir!"

The lieutenant nodded before hefting up his MA5B assault rifle and slid his M6D pistol into his holster. Minutes later the alarms in the Hanger bay started blaring.

"Alright, hual ass." Yelled the LT as he boarded one of the Pelicans.

"Sir, Yes Sir!" yelled the company as they progressed to their assigned Pelican dropships.

2. Chapter 2

Chapter 2

UNSC Pelican DropShip call sign Charlie 2-6

Unknown Star System, 2563, September, 19th

Departing from the Spirit of Fire's hanger bay

Chief Petty officer Sarah, known by her flight mates as Soaring Hammer, flipped the start up switch of her Pelican dropship even as the ground pounders ran up the gangplank into the Pelican's blood tray.

"This is Charlie 2-6, Ready for takeoff," muttered Sarah into her mike as the status light flashed green in front of her controls.

"Copy that Charlie 2-6, uploading nav data on forerunner vessel. Caution is advised, over," replied Serina with a hint of amusement as she watched the airlock crews scurry to the safety of their vacuum gears.

Sarah flipped another switch, igniting the thruster of her Pelican and bringing the dropship around to join the other pilots while choruses of acknowledgment filled the comm channel. Behind her the hydraulics of the Pelican ground to a halt as they sealed up the Pelican.

"Let's get this over with," said another pilot, " I got a case of beer waiting for me in my bunk."

"Yeah and a poster of a Diana waiting for you," snickered another pilot.

"Alright cut the crap," shouted the wing leader as her Pelican twitched.

Serina then interrupted. "Opening airlock doors," she said, amusement in her voice.

The airlock cycled open and the Pelican fired their thrusters to full thrust. Below them, two flights of Shortswords exited their bays, thrusters flaring. One even did a barrel roll as he raced to join his flight.

"Show off," muttered Sarah as she slid her Pelican into formation.

"I can hear you, you know?" replied the Shortsword pilot as he wiggled his single ship's wing in a mock salute.

"Yeah, yeah. Eyes in front Joseph before you smack into a meteor" replied Sarah and a burst of laughter filled the channel.

"Flight Bravo taking the lead," said a Shortsword pilot, giggles in her voice. An entire flight of Shortswords opened their throttle wide, pushing the agile single ships to the front.

"Alright marines, ETA damn quick, so hang on to your lunch" said Sarah as she fired up the engines. The door behind her slid open as Lieutenant Sanders slid through.

"Well that's one way to start a mission" said the Lt as he smiled and observed the space through the view screen. Sarah grinned and concentrated on piloting.

Minutes later the Forerunner vessel filled the screens as the collection of ships flew closer.

"God, that thing's huge," muttered Joseph through the comms.

"Be glad you don't have to clear it deck by deck" snickered another pilot.

Sarah was about to add another snicker to Joseph's comment went suddenly his Shortsword blew up.

"What the Hell!? Evasive maneuvers everyone!" shouted one of Bravo's pilots before a laser flew by Sarah's cockpit missing her bird's topside by mere inches.

Suddenly through an open com channel, "Incoming unidentified vessels, identify yourselves or be destroyedâ€¢| Warning system failure code 32-0-09-30." Before the channel cut off.

"Okay, was it me, or did a Forerunner AI try to shoot us up?" asked Sarah as she slid her Pelican back into formation. Silence answered her questions.

"Charlie 2-6, be advised. Priority one package onboard. Do you copy, over?" said Serina as she went through the sensor data about the Forerunner's laser.

"Copy that Serina, Priority one confirmed, orders from the captain?" replied Sarah as she shook herself out of her shock.

"Keep the package safe pilot, we lose her, we're stuck here" came captain Cutter's voice.

"Roger that sir" replied Sarah before she pulled the Pelican into a high gee maneuver in anticipation of another wave of lasers. The Bravo flight winked their green acknowledge lights, the silence showing their grief for the lost of a fellow pilot.

After ten minutes of full throttle, the eight remaining Shortswords of Bravo flight pulled up and took a defensive formation above the Pelicans.

"Coming into contact with Forerunner vessel. Recommend you check your space gear, marines." said Sarah as she flipped off the dropship's thruster. Extending the landing gear, Sarah slowly brought the Pelican into contact with the keyship, a dull 'Thunk' signaling contact between the pelican and the ancient vessel.

"Alright, Ready when you are Lt," said Sarah as she put her finger on the switch in preparation for opening the rear hatch.

"Open the hatch, we're ready" radioed Sanders as his vacuum suit sealed with hiss. The atmosphere was pumped back into their tank before the rear hatch eased open silently in the vacuum. The Marines filed out the Pelican, weapons up and ready to fire.

"Looks clear, Lt," said another marine

"Alright, company on me, regroup at the airlock. Doctor, mind getting that airlock open?" Asked Sanders as he surveyed the surroundings.

Anders nodded, almost unnoticed by the lieutenant as she swung her bulky armored vacuum suit towards the holograms floating above the surface of the Forerunner metal.

"Give me a moment, I'll try to access the airlock controls and get us a way into the ship" said Anders as she quickly started tapping at the Forerunner hieroglyphs.

As Anders worked, the gathered marines gazed around taking in the

view of space with a few curiously examining the hull of the Forerunner vessel.

"Got it," said Anders as a huge hole started to open up beneath the company's feet. A few marines panicked and waved their hands to balance themselves but it only served to make them spin around uncomfortably.

Sighing at the sight, Lieutenant Sanders ordered, "Marines, activate your suits' magnetic boots. I'd rather not lose men before we even get inside."

His men, chagrined, complied and they stuck to the Hull before anyone could float off.

The men gathered there stared into the airlock and turned on their tac lights.

"Alright, move in Marines. Mind giving some support, Sarah?" asked Sanders as he walked in with first squad.

"My pleasure, sir," she replied, as her Pelican lifted off the hull and rotated to face the airlock. Seconds later the Pelican's powerful floodlights came on. "Looks all clear from up here," called out Sarah as she scanned the area with the Pelican's sensor suite.

"Alright, move in and secure the area." The marines moved inside, their tac lights playing across the silvery metal of the airlock.

"Area secure sir," said a marine before another set of Forerunner hieroglyphs sprung to life in front of him.

"You might want to tell the doc to take a look at this," added the marine as Anders made her way into the airlock. This one took her longer to access as the Forerunner language moved across the hologram. With a final swipe of her hand, the holograms disappeared. There was a mild vibration as the outer airlock cycled shut, sealing the team in.

There was a telltale hiss of atmosphere as the airlock slowly pressurized. A marine waved a tactical ARGUS detector to test the air and the result came back breathable.

"It's safe to take off the suits sir." reported the marine.

"Okay people, take off the suits. Doctor I expect you to open the inner airlock so my company can pass through. No point for us to breach the other airlock to just get stuck here"

The ODST nearby snickered at the Lt's joke while Anders shook her head in amusement, before reactivating the Forerunner's control panel. Seconds later the inner airlock groaned and protested loudly as they slowly slid apart.

As the doors slid open, blue hued lights flickered on, bathing a monstrous room with light. The lieutenant and his squad were the first ones through. They scanned the area and motioned the others to follow.

"Holy shit" muttered a marine as they stepped inside... Suddenly the airlock behind them slammed shut with a resounding bang.

"Anyone get the idea that this might be a trap?" suggested Sarah as her Pelican twitched, the fore 80mm autocannon swinging from side to side.

3. Chapter 3

Chapter 3

Forerunner keyship

Unknown Star system, 2563, September, 19th

Inside the Forerunner hanger bay.

"Eyes peeled people. Check your corners." Said Lieutenant Sanders as he led his squad towards one of the Forerunner single ship in the bay. As they came within meters of the vessel, its hatch hissed open and a ramp lowered to the ground.

"Doctor Anders, move up, see if you can find the location of this ship's bridge" Said the Lt as he sweep his rifle across the interior of the single ship.

"On my way Lieutenant" reply Anders as she moved towards the ship. Her ODST escorts flowing behind quickly.

"Sarah, try and hail the Spirit of Fire, I need to speak to the Captain" Ordered the Lt as he relax his grip on his MA5B assault rifle.

"Aye Aye sir, you want me to set her down?" said Sarah as she nudges her Pelican away from the Marines under it. The Lt shrugged and Sarah took the sign as a yes. Swinging her Pelican around as she settled it down on a raised platform. Flicking the switch, the Pelican's engine died down as its landing gear made contact with the platform.

"This is Charlie 2-6, to Spirit of Fire do you copy over?" asked Sarah into her mike. Static answered her. "I repeat, this is Charlie 2-6 to Spirit of Fire do you copy over" Said Sarah again, more urgently now. Shaking her head in frustration, she opened a personal channel to Sanders "Sir, the Spirit isn't answering. Might be the metal this ship is made off interfering with the signal."

"Copy that chiefâ€|. Try hailing the other Pelicans if we're lucky they will be able to pick it up" said Sanders as he motion First Platoon's leader forward.

"Alright, sir." Said Sarah as she flicked another switch cutting off the personal channel. "This is Charlie 2-6, to Any UNSC personnel, anyone receiving?" she released the button and waited for a replyâ€| no response. "I repeat this is Charlie 2-6, to any UNSC personnel, anyone receiving?" Static answer herâ€|. Suddenly

"Charlie 2-6 this is Bravo lead I read you, Soaring hammer." came the voice of Bravo flight's wing leader.

"Thank god, we can't contact the Spirit of Fire. Can you act as a relay point?" Ask Sarah with a tinge of relieve in her voice.

"That's an Affirmative Charlie 2-6, relaying now"

"This is Spirit of Fire, what the status of the boarding party?" Came captain Cutter's voice.

"Green sir" replied Sanders "The space in this Forerunner hanger bay is huge sir, god know how many places we have to search before finding the bridge"

"Alright, I'm sending in more troops, hopefully we can get this Forerunner ship underway, Cutter out." Reply Captain Cutter. The channel closed as the signal was terminated. Sanders walk up and tapped the doctor's shoulder "Any luck doc?"

Anders turned slightly to look at Sanders before replying, "Yes it's here" with a jab of her finger, and the schematics of the Forerunner keyship appeared in front of her. A section of the vessel was highlighted in red while a blinking green dot appeared in the middle of the ship.

"Okay shouldn't be too far awayâ€!" Said the Lt before he uttered a curse. On the schematics, the holograms shifted and show their current location. They were on the far side of the ship with the red section between them and the bridge. "Any idea what's waiting for us in those highlighted areas doc?"

"Maybe hang on" muttered Anders as she swipe her hand across the holographic controls, after a few seconds of manipulating, the hologram zoomed in on the highlighted area and a video screen pop up. A blazing red 'eye' glared at them from the video screen.

"Reclaimers! The child of my makers! This cannot BEâ€!. NO I WILL NOT BOW DOWN TO THOSE WHO HAVE ABANDON ME!" Suddenly the red 'eye' grew brighter and the view screen suddenly terminated.

"Okay what the hell was that?" Asked Sanders as he rubbed his eyes from the brightness.

"If I have to speculate from the data I have gathered from this fighter's database, that was the Forerunner AI in charge of this ship" with another flick of her hand, the data on the hologram changed. "It's been approximately 100525 years since the AI's activation." stated Anders.

"No wonder the light bulb is pissed" muttered Sanders as he motioned his platoon leaders forward. "Alright men listen up, we're going to do this the old fashion way, divide and conquer." "First and Second Platoon"

" Sir!" yell two Major Sergeants

" On me, we got a light bulb to switch off." Said Lieutenant Sanders as his men grin at the joke. " Third Platoon, Hold the fort, no need to lose our only way in and out."

" You can count on us sir" said the lieutenant JG Liz as she chambered a round into her MA5B.

"Lieutenant, wait" said Anders as she turned to face Sanders "You and your men don't have the firepower to take that AI down, Not to mention there will be Sentinels aboard this Forerunner ship. I suggest you wait till reinforcement arrive from Spirit of fire"

The Lt stare at the doctor and arched an eyebrow. "And you know this how?"

"This is the data I managed to get about it from the database before the AI locked me out" said the doctor as she manipulated the hologram. A 3d hologram of the machine shiver into view. "This is the AI, they are refer to as a Monitor in the database. While they may look deceptively small, they are armed with a high intensity beam weapon and their core matrix is securely protected by a very thick layer of Forerunner metal that is near impenetrable by almost all our weapons"

"So I guess smashing the light bulb with my rifle butt won't work. Any suggestions, doc?" Asked Sanders, his humor hiding his unease well.

"Yes, tell the Captain to ship over the M6 Grindell Nonliner Rifle, the power of that weapon should be able to penetrate the Monitor's tough casing with several hits" Replied Anders as she tapped calculations into her personal datapad.

Again an arched eyebrow from the lieutenant "Overkill much? But if you say so..." reply the Lt as he jogs back towards Sarah's Pelican.

4. Chapter 4

Chapter4

UNSC Modified Colony ship Spirit of Fire

Unknown star system, 2563, September, 19th

Holding position from the unidentified Object.

"Serina, are the second batch of troops ready to move out?" Ask captain Cutter as he flick through the reports on his command chair.

"Yes sir, they are awaiting your permission to leave the ship" Replied the AI as she projected her avatar on a nearby holo projector "But three Spartans and another 2 full companies? Even that is an unusual deployment by you... expecting trouble captain?"

"Just a feeling, no point in being unprepared when things goes down" shrugged Cutter as he got up. Tapping his personnel com piece "Delta flight, mission is a go. Good luck out there, Cutter out."

There was an creepy silences as a video feed from a hanger's camera pop up, showing the Delta flight taking off. Even as Cutter examine the video, he was already plotting a course around the Unknown object

to reach the Forerunner vessel.

"Serina," whispered the captain

"Hmmm?" asked the AI as she focused on the captain.

"Tell Echo squadron to get ready, I got a new mission for them" Said Cutter as he sat down and tapped new data into his console. He brought up the image of the unknown construct, "I need them to conduct a recon run on this object, we might be able to find out who built it and what it's made for."

"So... nothing too difficult then?" asked Serina sarcastically as she access the personal com of the pilots.

"Not now Serina." Said the captain as he stare out the viewport into the darkness of space.

Aboard the Forerunner vessel.

"Please tell me this is not a joke?" begged Lieutenant Sanders as he survey the casualty report coming in from his recon team.

"I'm afraid not Lieutenant, the reports are quite accurate, it seems this is one of the major obstacles that we need to get through in order to even get close to the Monitor" Said Dr. Anders as she replayed a particular video from one of the marines helmet cam.

"It appears these sentinels are part of a Forerunner last resort defense plan.." muttered Anders as she turn to the Holographic controls of the Forerunner single ship. The video holograms disappeared and were replaced with a schematic of a gigantic robot. with a swipe of Anders hand, the schematic split into several pieces. "This is what the Forerunners call an Enforcer. A unit designed to suppress a massive Flood outbreak as well as protecting the interior of their ships."

Lieutenant Sanders paused to study the schematics, and reached out to tapped a part that interested him. The piece he tapped enlarged.

"What does it take to take one of these things down?"

Dr Anders studies the data available for a while, before suggesting "A few well placed Plasma grenades or SPRNK missiles should be able to destroy it. But it is highly not advisable. According to the database, this robot was designed to decimated entire company."

The Lieutenant stood there shocked while he try to process how to proceed with his mission. Suddenly...

"Sir, Serina is on the line" Said Sarah as she patched the AI through.

"What is it ,Serina? Asked the LT sharply, annoyed at being interrupted in the middle of his debriefing.

"Your reinforcements are inbound, play nice." Replied the AI before she cut the link.

"Well that's was just rude..." muttered the LT as he shook his head. "Anyway, so we just need a few well place shots with a Jackhammer to

take this thing down? Sounds easy enough"

"It, isn't." Reply Anders as she tapped another part. "These Enforcers have 3 shields in front that are almost immune to any sort of ballistic weaponry, it has 2 pulse for close to mid range targets. and if pressed it will fire it missiles to cut the numbers down to manageable sizes."

"Things never get any easier, does it?" said the Lt as he try to figure a way to destroy the Enforcer.

"How about we take the lead sir?" came a new voice.

The lieutenant was so deep it though he nearly jumped at the voice. He turned around and saw three Spartans starting at him from behind their gold plated visor. "If you Spartans want to go in first be my guest," stammered the Lt as he stare up at the 7foot tall Super soldiers.

The lead Spartan nodded before turning around, heading towards a landed Pelican. Even as the other 2 Spartan follow him, the Lt just stare at them in awe, his HUD displaying the following data: Petty Officer Second Class Jerome, Petty Officer Second Class Douglas ,and lastly, Petty Officer Second Class Alice.

In another part of the hanger bay " I dun know about you, boys and girls, but I like having swabbies in the front!" Shouted the ODST CO, laughter fill the hanger as the sometimes consider crazed Orbital Drop Shock Troopers laugh.

There was a flare of thrusters as the squadron of shortswords single ships blast their way clear of the Spirit of Fire " Alright people listen up, the Captain wants us to do a recon run on this object. I want all of you to be on alert, any pilot that get his wingman killed will wished he was at the gates of Hades to get him back! Am I clear?" said the squadron leader of Echo

"Aye sir" came the chorus of acknowledgments from the rest of Echo squadron. The squadron's thrusters flared as they pushed their shortswords to full throttle, acceleration increasing by the second. Little do they know, the Universe is bigger and more mysterious than they ever imagine.

Author notes: Yes I brought the Spartans in, cann't have any mayhem without them. BTW I'll reveal what happens to Echo squadron in chapter 5.

5. Chapter 5

Chapter5

UNSC Shortsword single ship, call sign Echo 5-9

Unknown star system, 2563, September, 19th

Approaching the unidentified Object for a recon sweep.

"Echo 5-9, do you copy over?" came the voice of Echo lead.

"Roger Echo lead, I hear you five by five." Reply Shina as she examined the object that was growing larger on her viewport.

"Move to this location and perform a sensor sweep. I've dropped a nav point for you. We'll cover the rest of the thing, whatever it is." Came back Echo lead's voice.

"Roger Echo5-9 heading out." Said Shina as she twitched her flight controls to compensate the change in direction. Her Shortsword bank hard right as she brought it to point towards the nav point. Flipping a few switches that brought her Short sword's sensor system online, "Sensors online, beginning sensor sweep". Reported Shina as she maneuver her agile fighter/bomber next to the object.

"Copy that, Echo5-9..." there was a sudden silence as Echo lead frowned at his own sensor data. "SHIT! ECHO 5-9, BREAK, BREAK!" shouted Echo lead as the energy signature of the object spiked. There was a stunned silence as Echo5-9 try to move away from the object before she disappeared in a flash of blue light. "WHAT THE HELL JUST HAPPEN!" roared Captain Cutter as the Spirit of Fire make course changes to point it's MAC cannon at the object.

"I don't know sir" came the shell-shocked voice from Echo lead.

"Serina, what do you have?" asked Cutter as he tried to calm himself, "Any trace of what is left of Echo5-9?"

"Well, this is new... and scary." replied Serina as she replayed the video recording of the what happened to Echo5-9. It shows a blue lightning reaching out and zapping the Shortsword before the small single ship began to glow blue and disappeared.

"Slow that down to 1 frame every milliseconds" Ordered Cutter as he examined the video. The video replayed only this time much slower. "Freeze it right there" said Cutter suddenly. The video paused, and it show the Shortsword blurring, as if it was accelerating at FTL speeds. "Recall the other Shortswords, I want them away from the object until we figure out what happened to Echo 5-9" said Cutter as he reexamine the video once more.

"Sir something's wrong, the sensors are picking up a contact" said the Sensor officer before displaying the data on the viewscreen.

"Hmmm, it appears the object is traveling towards us at FTL speed in normal space Captain." Said the AI as she frowns at the sensor data. The was a sudden blue flash as a small ship decelerated suddenly in front of the object. "Receiving IFF signal, confirmed to be Echo5-9" Said the AI.

"Contact that singleship and find out what the hell just happened." Ordered Cutter as he settles down into his command chair.

"Echo5-9, this is the Spirit of Fire do you copy over?" came Serina's voice over the com. There was a hiss of static as the crew awaited a response. "I repeat, Echo 5-9 this is the Spirit of Fire do you copy over?"

There was a slight groan before a reply came "Spirit of Fire, I read

you. Requesting permission to dock." came the voice of Shina

"Request approved, move toward docking bay 7, what happen Echo5-9?" Ask Serina as she shifted most of the ships sensors to point towards the Shortsword

"Hell if I know, I woke up in a different star system with a similar unknown object and was doing another recon to find where everybody went when I blacked out again." Reply Shina as she wobbly piloted her Shortsword into a flight path provided by Serina.

"Roger that, RTB for a debrief." reply Serina before she cut the com. "Captain, I would suggest we stay a safe distance away from the object until a more complete analysis can be done"

The captain nodded" Move us towards the Forerunner ship, keep the ship away from that object for at least 500 thousand kilometers away"

"Staying away from mysterious object, aye" Reply Serina sarcastically, as she adjusted the ship's course. Suddenly she paused, "Captain incoming transmission from the boarding party"

"Put it on speaker Serina," said Cutter before asking " what is it Lieutenant Sanders?"

"Oh shitâ€| Sir, we got trouble here," there was a burst of fire from an Assault Rifle "the Enforcersâ€| we counted about a dozen of those darn things." There was a telltale whoops as a missile was launched, seconds later a detonation ripped across the com channel "FIRE THOSE MISSILES GOD DAMN IT, RETURN FIRE!" Yelled Sanders "Sir requesting more reinforcementsâ€| Oh Shit Oh Shit" Before the com channel cut off.

Captain Cutter looked pointedly at Serina" Send more troops, tell them to be ready for anything"

"Sir, requesting more reinforcementsâ€|. OH Shit Oh Shit!" cursed Sanders as he dived behind a crate for cover. A golden object landed where he had been standing and detonated with the force of a frag grenade.

"Where the Hell are the Spartans?" Yell the LT as he brought his AR up and fired off a burst at the Enforcer. His bullets pinged harmlessly off the Blue energy field in front of the Enforcer "Fuck this" he yell before firing the rest of his clip into the robot's shield. The blue shield flicker red slightly before a Jackhammer missile detonated on the shield destroying the emitters.

"Need a hand?" Asked Douglas before he fired off his second missile. The Spartan reached behind and pulled out another tube of rockets and began reloading. The Enforcer swirled to face the reloading Spartan, its pulse laser glowing a bright red.

Suddenly a ruby color laser Shot forward melting and destroying the Enforcer's optical sensor. Jerome stepped back into cover as the Enforcer pivot towards him, firing it's missiles. The Spartan dove gracefully away from the his cover as the missiles detonated ripping his cover to shreds.

"Just like old times huh?" Commented Alice before she heft up a M41LAAG spraying the Enforce with 12.7mm rounds. With no shield to stop them, the bullets slammed into the Enforcer pockmarking it's surface with craters before it's arms fell off.

"One down and 11 more to go" Remarked a Marine before a series of explosions signaled the death of five more of the Forerunner creation

"Make that 6 more, Jarhead" shouted an ODST as he reload his Jackhammer missile launcher.

The firefight lasted 12 minutes before the Airlock cycled opened, a Vulture Gunship burst in and its A-74 Sylver Vertical Missile launcher firing a barrage alongside it's Argent V missiles and it's 30mm GUA-23 Autocannons spray a barrage of exploding shells at the remaining Enforcers' shields.

"Hell yeah here comes the cavalry!" Whooped a Marine as he fire another duo of Jackhammer missiles into the unshielded behind of an Enforcer.

With the arrival of the Heavy Gunship, The remaining Enforcers were reduced to rubble as the missiles from the Vulture hit home, blasting pieces of Forerunner metal everywhere in the hanger bay.

"And that people is how we do things" Yelled the ODST CO.

"HOORAH!" replied the battle wary marines.

"Lieutenant, I assume it's safe to come out now?" Asked Anders as he walked out of the Forerunner singleship.

"It is ma'am," reply the lieutenant as he leaned against a crate, and setting down his MA5B.

There was a sudden rumble, before hatches in the hanger bay started to open. Before anyone can cry out a warning, hundreds of Sentinels gush out of the hatches. There was an eerily silences as the Sentinels stopped and examine the battered remains of the Marine company.

"Out of the frying pan and straight into the cooking pot" Muttered a Marine over the com. No one bothered to reply.

Author's note: Hmmmm it seems the boarding party ran into another trouble. Oh Btw here's a Spoiler alert. Someone gonna come knocking near the Relay not I'm going say who though :)

6. Chapter 6

Chapter6

UNSC Marine 1st Company

Unknown star system, 2563, September, 19th

Onboard Forerunner vessel.

"Holy shit" muttered a marine as he slowly back up with the rest of his company "Anyone got an idea on how to get out of this"

The Sentinels moved closer, the lead was a bright golden colour in comparison to the others which were the classic grey-silver metal of Forerunner Alloys. It's three booms flare open when the Marine spoke into his com unit.

"Hold position everyone, if this is going to be a last stand we might as well take as many of these bastard with us" Ordered Lieutenant Sanders as he raised his AR into a firing position.

"Fhejelet' Pnught Juber?" filled the com channel.

"What the hellâ€|.." muttered the lieutenant as he slowly pivoted towards the gold sentinel. "Shouldn't the tin cans be blasting us already?"

Suddenly the Sentinels' boom snapped into a new configuration "Security protocol enable. Awaiting orders Reclaimers."

"Okayâ€|. Doc? Any ideas?" muttered Sanders as he slowly ease his finger from his MA5B's trigger.

Dr Anders push passes her ODST escort and approach the sentinels. "Clarify your function." Said the doctor as she examines the sentinels from a few meters away.

"Function of unit 30-29" reply the Golden sentinel "Primary objectiveâ€| Defend and protect Reclaimers until Keyship have arrived at pre-determined location. Secondary objectiveâ€| Eliminate all sector of possible infection should Flood be detected."

"Status of objective?" asked Anders as she move closer.

"Primary Objectiveâ€|. Pendingâ€|.. Secondary objectiveâ€| Pending." Replied the monotonous voice of the sentinel. It swirled around as if it was bored before refocusing on the doctor.

"Ship status?" inquire the doctor.

The Sentinel paused and was silent for 3 full minutes as it accessed the ships operational systems. "Fusion drive operating with 45% efficiency, Main engines are currently offlineâ€| Ship AIâ€|.WARNING, RAMPART AI DETECTED, SHIP LOCKDOWN REQUIRED."

Suddenly there was a warning blaring in the hanger bay, a heavy blast door slowly slid over the airlock. It closed with a 'Thunk' and a shimmering blue energy shield appeared over the blast door.

"This is not good" muttered Sanders as he tries to raise the Spirit of Fire. "Spirit of Fire this is Lieutenant Sander come in." "I repeat, Spirit of Fire this is Lieutenant Sander, come it."

"No signal sir" replied Sarah as she checked her battered Pelican.

"Well I guess everything went FUBARâ€|.." sighed the lieutenant. "Doc, you think we can get the lockdown lifted?"

Anders was silent as she examined the Forerunner language on the sentinel. "Unit 30-29 state the requirement to lift ship lockdown"

"Complyingâ€|.. requirements for lifting lockdown" reply the sentinel "Deactivation of Rampart AI require. All Corrupted Enforcers must be destroyed."

"Where the hell are they then? The sooner we can get rid of those things the faster we can recontact the Spirit."

The sentinel was silent before its middle eye blaze blue and projected a schematic of the ship. There was a while before the schematic changed and parts of the ship were highlighted in red.

"Greatâ€|.. deeper inside an unknown shipâ€|" Groan another Marine

"Captain, I'm picking up contacts approaching at FTL speeds." Said Serina as she started to display sensor data on the main view screen. "Scans show multiple of the following shape. Estimated tonnage base of these reading, each ship to be the tonnage of a corvette."

"How many are we looking at?" Ask Cutter as he examines the display. The enhance image show a narrow vessel with 2 stubby like wings.

"An Estimated 12 ships. Sir" Reply the AI. She suddenly frown " New contact detected in the middle of this fleet." The image on the viewscreen enlarged. Serina highlighted a slightly bigger bump. "Hmmmâ€|. It appears to be a ship of similar design. However its size suggest the tonnage of a Frigate."

"ETA before their arrival?" said the captain as he tapped on his personal datapad.

"2 minutes, Shall I recall the boarding party so we can all die together?" Asked the AI sarcastically.

Frowning at the AI's sarcasm, Cutter continue to study the ships. "Spin up the MAC Serina, arm Archer missile pods A through F, something tells me they aren't coming around for some tea."

"Presenting an armed to the teeth appearance to an unknown fraction. Sure why not?" replied the AI as she worked to carry out her orders. "Should I prepare the first contact protocols?"

The captain simply replies with a nod.

Vegrull Tyzuris was pacing around the command center of his cruiser. He was trying to hide his excitement of having some action on what was supposed to be a long and boring patrol. His ships have detected a small ship appearing from what was supposed to be an inactivated primary relay, moment later the ship disappeared. He then ordered his fleet to follow the ship, hoping to gain some fame by enforcing citadel law.

"How long before we arrive at the receiving relay" Asked Vegrull

Tyzuris as he stopped pacing.

"Arriving in 3, 2, 1." Reply his subordinate.

"Get me a sensor sweep of the area, we are going to find those responsible for breaking Citadel law." Ordered Vegrull Tyzuris as he glace at his ships tactical hologram display.

"Scanningâ€¦ Contact detected!" shouted a subordinate.

The tactical hologram display changes, revealing a vessel of unknown design. The vessel was bulky and the starboard side of the vessel seems to be damaed.

"One ship?" Asked Vegrukk Tyzuris as he examines the hologram.

"Sir the vessels is approximately 2.5kilometers longâ€¦" Muttered a subordinate as he recheck his sensors "Even the Asari don't have a ship that huge"

"Any zero elements detected?"

"None sir. Whatever they are using to power this monster it's not Zero."

"Bring us in, arm our mass accelerator." Ordered Vegruij Tyzuris as he sat down in his chair. There was a stun silence before he asked "Do I need to repeat my order"

His subordinate shook his head before carrying out his commander's orders. The Turian patrol fleet turned as one and moved in close to the vessel. Their mass accelerators begin to gather energy as they charge up.

"Captain, I'm detecting magnetic fields emitted from those ships. Reading suggest a number under-powered rail guns" Said Serina as she activated her holoprojector.

"Have they sent and communication?" Asked Cutter as he frown at the ships.

"Negative, Sir" Said Serina as she frown suddenly "Picking up slipspace ruptures around the alien ships! Profiles matched Covenant vessels!"

There was an eerie silence as blue white portals open spewing out a fleet of 4 Covenant vessels including an Assault Carrier.

"Holy Shitâ€¦" muttered a crew as he stare at the Covenant vessels

"Your Destruction is the will of the Gods and we are their instruments" came a translated voice over the com channel.

"Captain the Covenant vessels are charging weapons. Estimate 15 minutes before they enter firing range." Said Serina calmly as she watch the Covalent ships moving on approach vector.

"Captain new contacts! They appeared out of nowhere!" shouted a crewmen as proximaty sensors went wild.

"An ambush?" Asked Vegrukk Tyzuris as he try to understand the situation.

"Profiles don't match the unknown ships!" reply the crewmen

Suddenly the com officer shouted" Sir receiving a communication on an open channel."

"Put it on speaker" reply Vegrukk Tyzuris as he assessed the fleet surround his own

There was a sudden burst of sound before the channel closed.

"What was that?" asked Vegrukk Tyzuris

"No idea sir but sensors are indicating the new arrivals have begin charging weapons." Reply the sensor crewmen

"Redirect weapons, We shall show those who dare to oppose Council Law. Show them the might of the Turian Hierarchy!" Shouted Vegrukk Tyzuris.

The Turian ships fired up their engines, and changed their vectors towards the Covenant ships. The frigates split into 2 wolf pack each hurtling towards a Covenant Destroyer each. Their mass accelerator firing in rapid broadsides.

The mass accelerator slugs was suddenly stopped when they impacted a large shimmering shield. Slug after slug the shield refuse to be whittled down.

"Those kinetic barriers should have gone down by now..." thought Vegrukk Tyzuris as his Cruiser joined the fray.

The Cruisers mass accelerators fired pounding the Destroyers' shield. Suddenly molts of blue light gathered at the Covenant vessels' broadsides A blue blot of Plasma lanced out and struck a Turian Frigate. The plasma bounced of the Stressed shields before it's magnetic field forced it back towards the ship. The kinetic barrier fails as heat from the plasma torpedo melted the kinetic barriers and punched through the thin armor into the atmosphere rich interior.

The frigate shudder a bit before the plasma finally reached its Zero core. The frigate detonated in a fiery fireball draining the kinetic barriers of it's nearby sister ships. Even as chaos took hold of the Turian fleet, the Covenant ships move in for the kill.

Authors note: this isnot looking good for either the Spirit of Fire or the Turians. wonder what's going to happen next =)

7. Chapter 7

Chapter7

UNSC Modified Colony ship Spirit of Fire

Unknown star system, 2563, September, 19th

Currently engaging an unknown hostile and a Covenant Fleet.

"Captain the unknown fleet is engaging the Covenant vessels." Said Serina calmly.

"Get me contact with the boarding party onboard the Forerunner vessel, tell them to prep for evac if they do not have control of the Forerunner weapons" Said Captain Cutter as he watches the ongoing battle between the Covenant and the unknown ships.

"Aye sir, recalling the boarding party so we can all die together." Replied Serina Sarcastically.

There was a bright explosion as one of the Covenants plasma torpedo struck and found the core of an unknown corvette. Suddenly a video screen popped up and zoomed in on the doomed vessel. It shows a blue shielding deflecting a Plasma torpedo before the torpedo's magnetic field forced the ball of plasma to hit the shield again and penetrate the hull of the unknown ship.

"Am I the only one getting freaked out that there's another alien race with energy shielding?" Asked Serina as she stood on her holopad wide eyed.

The Captain looked at her and he was not amused. "Serina, target those Covenant ships, fire our MAC and Archer missile. First target, this Covenant Destroyer," said Cutter as he highlighted the selected ship.

"Aye sir, spinning up MAC rounds. Time for some payback!" said the AI gleefully as she activated the Spirit's spinal mounted Magnetic Accelerator cannon. The colony ship was momentary covered with a white cloud of vapor as the Archer missile pods all around the ship unleashed their fusion missiles at the Covenant Destroyer. The Destroyer, busy slaughtering the unknown ships ignored the missiles. It soon proved to be a fatal mistake.

Even as the Archer missiles are three quarter from the Covenant destroyer, the MAC gun on the Spirit of Fire flashed four times. The 4 lighter 200ton Kinetic slugs traveling at 30000 meter per second slammed into the Covenant vessel's already damaged shield.

The first 3 vaporized on contact while the last one punched through the weakened shield and devastate the hull beneath it. Micro seconds later, 210 Archer missiles dived into the ragged hole made by the MAC round and detonated inside the ship.

The Destroyer's hull bloomed outward as it struggle to contain the explosions and failed epically as the Covenant Destroyer detonated in a huge fireball engulfing its nearby sister ship which survived behind its silvery shield.

"That got their attention" remarked Serina as she scan the sensor data "Uh oh, reading a lock from the surviving Covenant Destroyer" She was cut off as a blue bolt of plasma detached itself from the surviving Covenant destroyer and vectored towards the Spirit of Fire.

Vegrull Tyzuris was not happy. The loss of frigate while was not a very big deal in a war, however losing one on a patrol will be an

embarrassing point in his after action report. Putting aside that thought, he orders "All ships focus fire on the lead warship"

After a few seconds of organizing, the Turian fleet aligned itself back into a recognizable formation. As one they turn and presented their broadsides at the surviving Covenant ship and let loose barrages after barrages of mass accelerator slugs.

The Surviving Covenant Destroyer's shield flicker and finally shattered under the onslaught of the Turian fleet. The hull of the vessel stood little chance of resisting the slugs that pound it thickly armoured hide. Even as the hull was filled with holes, the Covenant destroyer released its last pair of plasma torpedo.

The Turian frigates was scattered when the Destroyer's reactors overloaded and the pair of plasma torpedo defused midflight, turning into a wave of plasma that easily eat through the weaken kinetic barriers of the leading frigates. The ships listed wildly as atmosphere decompress into the cold vacuum.

"Chieftain, the unknown Vessels have been reduced to half strength. But the Destroyers Warbringer and Unyielding Might are lost with all hands." Growled Ganturus as he survey his display. The Jiralhanae's grey fur bristle as he look at the sensor readings.

"ENOUGH OF THIS!" Roared the Chieftain "I want those WIMPS destroyed!" "Target that ship in the middle, I'll make a fine kill for our energy projectors" Ordered the Chieftain as he selected the Turian cruiser.

The Brute in charge of the weapons station grunted an acknowledgement and swipe it's paw over the ship's holographic control. "It is done Chieftain"

The Covenant Assault Carrier slowly turned, presenting its belly to the Turian fleet as energy slowly course into capacitors below...

"Come in Spirit of Fire. I repeat, Come in Spirit of Fire" muttered Sanders into his com unit as he shifted inside his armour. "God Damn it, I'm not getting through"

"As previously mention 500 and 62 times Reclaimer, the ship is in lockdown mode. all means of communication has been cut off" Reply the Golden sentinel as it hover beside the lieutenant.

"Whatever, Goldilocks" Muttered the Lt as he gather up his weapon and equipment. "Alright since we aren't going anywhere might as well finish the mission, First platoon on me, Spartans that means you too" Said the Lt as he stretch his leg.

He was rewarded with groans from the marines of first platoon, while the Spartans nodded before starting to gather their things. Dr Anders crossed her arms before moving towards him "I'm coming with you" she stated with an air of superiority.

"Don't suppose can convince you to stay?" Asked the Lt. Silence answered him. "Fine. you stay in the middle of the group" He step up to the front door and motioned his marines forward. "Goldilocks lead the way"

"My designation is Unit 30-29, Reclaimer" reply the Sentinel as it focused on the Lieutenant.

"Whatever" Snapped the Lt as he lead the first squad through a door.

"Fleetmaster, The Cruiser Sangheilios Pride has detected multiple energy spikes in a nearby sector" Said a sensor operator as 2 of his 4 mandibles twitched.

A Sangheili in a highly decorated silver white armour turn his gaze onto the sensor operator. "On the main Screen". There was an awkward silence before the reading display on the screen in the Assault carrier's bridge screen.

"That reading" Said the fleetmaster as he indicate with a long finger. The Minor sensor operator highlighted and enlarge the display. "Compare that to the magnetic-kinetic weapons reading employ by the Humans"

"It is done Fleetmaster" reply the Minor as he pull up the sample data from the ship database. The energy spike was a near identical match.

"Alert the fleet" Ordered the fleetmaster as he sat straighter in his command chair "Tell them to prepare for a slip space jump to the sector these reading were detected."

"By my honour, Fleemaster" Replied the communication officer as he shifted in his bright red armour. "All ships, prepare Slipspace drives and proceed to these coordinates" relayed the Major before closing the communication channel.

The Fleetmaster's board light aqua-blue as his shipmasters acknowledge his commands. "The fleet is ready to jump, Fleetmaster" Reported the communication Major.

"Very well, jump" Said Rtas Vadum as he flex his mandibles in anticipation.

There was a moment before bright blue portals of slipspace open in front of the Sangheili fleet with the Assault carrier Shadow of Intent in the lead"

Author's note : More fleet battle in the upcoming chapter this is gonna be one heck of a slugging fight. sry for the slight delay.

8. Chapter 8

Chapter8

UNSC 1st Platoon of 1st company

Unknown star system, 2563, September, 19th

Deep within Forerunner vessel

The dark corridor was dotted with light as a squad of marines swept their assault rifles' underslung flashlight over the Forerunner alloy. The lights play across the silvery metal occasionally coming across a maintenance sentinel that dratted around.

"This is way too easy" stated a Marine as he check his corner.

"Yeah, I keep getting the feeling that something is watching us" replied another in a hushed whisper as he rechecked his ammo counter that glowed a bright blue on his MA5B.

"Can that chatterâ€¦ and move like you got a purpose" Snarled the sergeant as he caught up with his marines. He was about to chew the squad when a Sentinel Enforcer dropped from the ceiling and ripped the sergeant apart with it's gigantic claws.

"CONTACT!" Howler a panicky private as he fired a wild burst from his MA5B. Bullets ping off the Enforcer's think armour as the private spray it with full auto. The was a sudden whoosh before a Jack Hammer impacted the Enforcer dead center. The Enforcer exploded in a bright blast before the light faded away.

"Keep moving. We need to get to that insane AI fast" Yelled the Lt as more Enforcers dropped from the ceiling. "Shit not good" Yell the Lt as he backpedalled, MA5B firing wild burst at the Robots. The golden sentinel was silent while it's Blue white laser play across the surface of a nearby Enforcer.

"We're getting overrun here" Yelled a Marine before a blast vaporized him. Suddenly the lights in the corridor lit up and swarms of sentinels flew in. The Enforcers shifted their firepower onto their smaller brethren, whose shield flared bright white as they try to repel the firepower directed at them.

"I suggest we move now" Said the golden sentinel as it quickly retracted its weapon and turned around. Sanders didn't argue and the rest of 1st platoon quickly followed the sentinel.

"Captain, Hull integrity is falling to critical levels. Deck 7 is reporting fire on that deck." Said Serina as the two plasma torpedo torn into the damaged side of the ship.

"Sound decompression alarm and vent the atmosphere. It should stop the fire" ordered Cutter as he survey the damage to his ship on his commander screen.

Atmosphere was vented in an attempt to stop the fire from spreading. The molten Titanium-A plating suddenly solidify as the fire was instantly put out by the cold vacuum, turning from a bright yellow to a dull red.

Serina cocked her head to one side before saying "Fires have died down and hull temperature is stabilizing."

"Status on the remaining Covenant vessels?" inquired the Captain.

"Both Covenant Destroyers have been destroyed. The Battlecruiser is currently placing itself between the Unknown fleet and the Assault

Carrier." Reported Serina as she survey the fight taking place. "Warning detecting an energy spike!" shouted Serina before a bright blue beam of light hit the ship in the middle of the unknown fleet.

The beam suddenly shut off and there was a moment before the ship detonated in a fireball that scattered the remaining unknown ships. Even as the ships were thrown around like toys the sensors on the Spirit suddenly started beeping.

"Captain we may have a problem" Said Serina as large numbers of blue white portals appeared. The portals flashed hectically as a large number of Covenant vessels spilled into normal space. The bridge was filled with stunned silence as they witness a whole Covenant armada coming into the battle.

"Captain, we have lost the cruiser !" yelled a crewmen as he frantically as his eyes darted across his holographic console. "Sensors are also picking up more of those portals more ships are incomming!"

"Order a full retreat!" Snarled the Turian Captain as he assessed the situation.

As one the Turian frigates try to escape by moving towards the Mass relay. However their plans were foiled as the CCS class Battlecruiser slid into their path blocking the path. 8 of the surviving frigates fired their thrusters and managed to escape a head on collision but one unlucky one slammed into the Battlecruiser's shield. The frigate crumpled as it kinetic barrier failed while the battlecruiser charged up its laser banks and opened fired on the turians.

"We lost another frigate! Incoming enemy Guradian laser fire!" reported the crewman. "Engineering reports the engines are overheating! We need to vent the heat soon !"

"Calm yourself." Whispered the captain as he try to find a way out of this situation.

"Sir! More weapons fire from the new comers! Tracking them!" reported the weapons officer as he quickly manipulated his console.

Even as he did so the com officer reported "Incoming signal from the new arrivals! Putting it through the codexâ€|. No match sir"

"Weapons are not directed at us sir." Reported the weapon officer.

"Onscreen" reply the captain as he survey what remains of the Turian fleet. The galaxy map shifted and disappeared replace with a tactical image of the battle field. The original unknown that they were chasing was highlighted in yellow while the ones that devastated the Turian fleet was red. Zigzagging lines represent the energy weapon used by the later crisscrossing the space between the new fleet and the surviving two.

"They're firing on each other?" asked the Captain confused. "Nevermind, helm, get us out of here. There will be a reckoning for this marked my words" Growled the captain. There was no time wasted

as the turian replotted course and the eight remaining frigates jumped out of the system via the mass relay.

"Fleetmaster we are entering normal space" shouted the helmsmen as the Assault Carrier Shadow of Intent.

"Sensors get me a scan of the area. Arm plasma torpedo 2 and 3." Ordered Rtas Vadum as his eyes watch over his bridge crew.

"Detecting Covenant vessels in the area!" yell a communication officer as he sent a ping throughout the system. "Putting Registration data into the Oracle... Fleet master that's a Jiralhanae fleet!"

Rtas Vadum keyed his com device and yelled "All ships Fire at will burn their mongrel hides!" Acknowledgements filled his screen as individual shipmaster confirmed his orders.

The Fleetmaster manipulated the holographic control surveying the area around his fleet even as his ships moved to engage the Brute controlled vessels suddenly a piece of reading caught his eye.

"Communication officer Voro' Chonchiyo contact that human ship"

"By my honour" replied Voro' Chonchiyo before he attuned the Shadow of Intent's communication frequency to match that of the UNSC E-band "Unidentified Human ship This is the Sangheili Assault Carrier please respond" Voro' Chonchiyo waited a few seconds before repeating "Unidentified Human ship This is the Sangheili Assault Carrier please respond". "They are not responding Fleetmaster" grunted Voro' Chonchiyo as he attempted to try one more time.

Suddenly his holographic control changed as it received a reply through the frequency. "Fleetmaster receiving a video feed from the human vessel"

"Put it on screen" replied Rtas Vadum as he focus his attention on the central dominating holographic viewscreen in the ship's command center. The hologram shifted and changed into a video showing the bridge of the human ship.

"This is Captain Cutter of the UNSC vessel Spirit of Fire to what do i owe the honors" Said a man with salt and pepper hair. He made no attempt to hide his sarcasm as he glared at the officers in the Shadow of Intent's bridge.

"Hold your peace human, we are not here for a fight. Much have changed since your vessel have blown up the Shield world." Growled Rtas even as he stood up from his chair.

"I assumed you are referring to the Forerunner planet that contains a fleet of Forerunner vessels?" mused Cutter as he paced in the video screen. "Yeah we blown it all to hell and we'll do the same to as many of you ship before we go down. I for one will not go down without a fight!"

Rtas Vadum hold up his hand even as officers of his Bridge snarled from their seats "Captain Cutter of the Spirit of Fire hull designation CFV-88. If I was not aware of your ship's current status as being designated as lost with all hands, I would have let my

officers fire and melt your ship into MOLTEN SLAG!" Snarled Rtas as he try to regain his composure."Now if may please listen!" as he survey the surprised face of Cutter "There is an UNSC patrol fleet nearby so unless you wish to continue being stranded, I suggest you wait until I can contact them" With that Rtas personally cut the com channels.

"Humans," Grunted a Sangheili Minor as he sat back down "Always disrespectful"

"Do not let appearance fool you brother" Said Rtas Vadum as he sat back into his commander chair "They have more than you give them credit. Now Voro' Chonchiyo kindly send a slipspace communication to notify UNFleetCom we have found one of their missing ships."

Even as the major nodded, Rtas return his attention to the surrounded Brute fleet. The battlecruiser went down easy, it's shields and armour destroyed by the 6plasma torpedo fired at it. The Assault Carrier however was a different story. the 10 Plasma torpedo fired at it impacted the ship's shield revealing the silver white energy that protected its hull from the super heated plasma.

"Enemy assault carrier shields are down to 56%, Detecting Energy build upon it fore energy projector!" reported the sensor operator before a massive destructive beam of photon cut into a Sangheili Destroyer's shield. The silver white film held before flickering and finally failed under the tremendous firepower brought on it.

"Fire our energy projectors! Full barrage!" Snarled Rtas as he survey the damage to the destroyer. The one key advantage the humans have gave them over the Jiralhanae was the humans understand and improve technology, even though a ship as old as the Shadow of Intent was given new and more efficient reactor designs, tremendously increasing their power output by 300%. The Sangheili vessel fired it fore energy projector and 2 beam of highly excited photon cut into the weaken shields of the enemy assault carrier and finally neatly slicing the ship in half.

"Enemy vessel destroyed" Reported the sensor operator as he check the read out.

"Sweep the system, I want every corner of this sector searched that was only an advance scouting party for the Jiralhanae's remaining fleet"

"My honour Fleetmaster" Replied the sensor officer. There was a few minutes of scanning before he gave out a gasp.

"What is it?" Inquire Rtas as he noticed the minor quivering.

"There is a forerunner ship in the system... Fleetmaster and if the sensors are correct, it is currently active..." replied the minor awe shocked as he nearly kneel down in honour of the Forerunner.

"Pulse the greeting of the ancients" whispered Rtas as he and most of his bridge crew shifted their gaze to the main view screen. There was no mistake, the Forerunner vessels is a Leviathans class key-ship one capable of destroying whole planets in one shot.

Major Domo Voro' Chonchiyo followed Rtas order and pulsed the

greeting on every known frequency. Seconds later a reply perfectly intoed in the Forerunner language was received "Request for reclamation received... Request Denied. Rampart AI confirmed on board containment and dismantle of Rampart AI underway. Be advised Reclaimers onboard" with that the com channel cut off.

Rtas Vadum split 2 of his mandibles in what pass as a grin. So the humans are already onboard.

Somewhere in a small solar system, fleets of blocky grey ships move about around a blue green planet, along with 215 newly rebuild MAC stations.

"Admiral receiving slipspace communication from the Sangheili Shadow of Intent, they found the Spirit of Fire!" Reported the communication of the UNSC cruiser Leviathan.

"Well what are you waiting for? Order the fleet to alert status, we are bring those people home!" replied a man with salt pepper hair. "It's about time you came back Cutterâ€|. " Muttered Admiral Harper as he open a private channel to Cairo station. "Hood you're gonna like thisâ€|.."

Author's note: Been a bit busy will update as often as possible. Got some exams coming soon. But take heart I will not abandon this story as I like the way it's going. =)

9. Chapter 9

Chapter9

C-Sec 3rd patrol fleet

Serpent Nebula, Around the Citadel space,

Patrolling the primary Relay of the Citadel.

Garrus Vakarian sigh as he settle himself into the sensor console seat. He was particularly unhappy with the recent reassignment after his little spat with Saren Arterius. The Specter was once again pulling strings to prevent him from getting any evidence and the little fistfight cause him to be sent to Citadel patrol fleet for the duration while Saren is still in the Citadel.

"No use fuming over that Particular incident" muttered Garrus as he focus his attention back onto the holographic console commonly used by every Citadel species. His sniper trained eye immediately pick out the reading of an incoming mass relay transit. "Sir, incoming unscheduled Mass relay transit" reported Garrus as he quickly tapped as his console.

The Turian sitting in the command chair nodded his praise to Garrus, detecting and tracking Mass relay transits are near impossible as the object in question are moving way faster than any wavelength that their sensors put out. But Garrus have managed to detect the pass 5 incoming relay transit without any problem, the young C-Sec officer is particularly talented.

"All ships, into formation, intercept the incoming transit" order

Executor Pallin as the settle into the command chair of the Turian Dreadnought assigned to guard the Citadel.

"Contacts transiting now" Reported Garrus as he pointed the sensor towards the incoming vessels "Receiving IFF, it's the Hierarchy 23rd patrol Fleet."

"That can't be right" muttered Pallin "That fleet should have a cruiser with them. Coms open channel to the lead frigate, something is not right"

"Aye sir," replied a Turian sitting at another console. "Approaching Hierarchy fleet, this is Citadel 3rd patrol fleet, please respond." Static hiss back in reply...

"This is Captain Russo Vallokius acting commander of the Hierarchy fleet, Our ships have been decimated and we have lost the cruiser. Requesting immediate assistance, we have wounded onboard and our mass effect core are at critical levels." came a wary Turian voice.

Before a reply could be sent, a damaged Turian frigate detonated in a blue hued fireball as it core destabilized.

"Alert the Citadel" snarled Pallin "Tell them to prepare emergency crews, also have technical expert extract the video logs from the surviving ships. The being responsible for this will pay dearly for crossing the Hierarchy."

"The acting commander of the surviving 23rd Hierarchy Fleet has brought forth some disturbingâ€|. video" muttered a Salarian councilor as he manipulated his Omni-Tool the main holographic screen in the council chamber.

The hologram shifted and displayed a video recording taken from one of the surviving Turian frigate. The image show how clearly how the blue whit plasma torpedo from the Covenant destroyer track the evasive frigate before it impacted the kinetic barrier of the frigate. The torpedo was deflected initially before it restrikes the weaken kinetic barrier, punching through and melting the hull beneath.

"As we can see clearly from this video, the beings show have highly advanced plasma weapons that are considerably powerful." Explained the Salarian before showing another video.

This one shows the Turian cruiser engaging the large assault carrier before being destroyed when the assault carrier fired its energy projector.

"They also have energy weapons?" muttered the Asari councilor.

"Impossible!" roared the Turian councilor "The energy requirement needed to power such a weapon will be impossible to achieve even with the most advance mass effect core we currently possess!"

"That's not the worst of it." Reply the Salarian as he manipulated the video a bit longer. The scene shifted once more and showed a view of the hull of the enemy hull when guardian lasers race away from the

camera, heading towards the ship's engine cones.

"They will be dead in space" smirked the Turian councilor before the it was wiped of his face. The lasers impacted an invisible barrier that shimmer silver before the covenant destroyer returned fired with its more powerful lasers, easily burning through a nearby Turian frigate.

"There's more" quickly added the Salarian. This time the view changed and split into two, one screen shows the frond camera of the Turian frigate, the other was showing the side camera. It shows a dull grey ship in the distance.

"Sensor estimates the ship in question is around to be around two and a half kilometer long. In fact most of the ship detected by the sensor is longer than 2 kilometers with the exception of the 2 purple hulled ships at one and a half kilometer each. But that's not itâ€|. "

He continues to manipulate the omni-tool and the video fast forward slightly, the video paused and was played there was four sudden flash of light from the ship before one of the purple ships flashed sliver and detonated.

"What was that? Asked the Asari councilor as she tried to slow down the frame of the video with her omni-tool. The video replayed, this time much slower. The imaged was suddenly paused by the salarian councilor as soon as the flash appeared once.

"As you can see" said the Salarian to the other two councilor, "there are also using projectile weaponry," as the video continue "what reading our sensors can get before the rounds impacted is that the round is approximately 200tons in mass and was travelling at a velocity of 30 thousand meters per second with an energy release of approximately 3tetra joules. And this ship just fired four of them"

"Four three tetra joules shots? All within microseconds of each other? Impossible" replied the Turian. "Even with our mass effect technology that will be well beyond any power generation method any civilization we have come across."

"And yet, Valern, they do have the technology to do so" replied the Asari councilor with a clam expression even as excitement continues to build up inside.

"Still I must remind you, Tevos, the species that owns that ship has violated Citadel law in forbidding the activation of a dormant relay." Snapped Valern as his Turian pride suffered a minor bruised from the asari's remark.

"They may have indeed broken Citadel law" said the Salarian councilor Milos, "But I do not think they intent to activate the relay, they surely have another form of FTL"

"What makes you suggest that?" Growled Valern "Of course they use mass relay! What species don't?" Added the Turian as his mandibles flared with his temper.

"Calm yourself Valern, there's no need to act brash!" said Tevos, in

an attempt to diffuse the situation. Milos nodded his agreement.

"Very well," Growled Valern "So what should we do about the beings? By Destroying half of the Hierarchy fleet its considered an act of war, the Hierarch will not stand down from this violent confrontation" said Valern as he slowly cool down his temper.

"Indeed, their technology is very advanced, so much to say they have working large scale energy weapons" agreed Milos.

"War with such being will surely not end well for us" said Tevos "But there might be something we have overlooked" with that she started manipulating her omni-tool. "This last part of the recording doesn't make any sense" as she played the video. It shows the sudden appearance of several more purple hued vessels from white portals and opening fire on the first group of purple ships.

"Maybe they they're having a civil war" mused Valern as he observed the destruction of the large purple vessel before the camera was deactivated for the relay jump.

"It does seem to point that way" Agreed Tevos "I propose we send an expedition to try and find out more of these unknown civilizations, perhaps we can gain some knowledge of their culture and technologies. A vote is in order I think."

The other two councilor nodded their agreement and they each typed their decision into their omni-tool.

"The results are agreed then" Announced Milos "The STG will be sending some teams to observe the new species."

"Agreed, butâ€|. " Added Valern "I recommend a Spector to be on hand. Saren Arterius will be the one for this job."

"Very well" conceded Tevos, knowing Valern will not back down from his stance. "But Diplomacy will be done by the Asari Republic."

The other two councilor nodded their agreement before the meeting was adjourned.

Elsewhere in distant clusterâ€|..

"High Prophet of Revenge, we have lost contact with the Assault carrier battlegroup in the 46th sector" Reported a huge and hairy creature at a com console. "We managed to obtain this from them before their destruction" add the Jiralhanae. The hologram shows a large vessel clearly of Forerunner origin.

The being sitting in an antigravity throne swirled the chair slowly and gaze on the Jiralhanae with intelligent and cunning eyes. "Send the fleet, the sign from our gods is at hand!"

Author's note, Sorry about long delay had an exam to deal with, hope this longer chapter makes up for it. The council will try diplomacy , somewhat and Covie loyalist are back. As a Spartan of team Black said" The Universe needs less uglies"

10. Chapter 10

Chapter 10

UNSC 4th Fleet Flagship, Valiant class Cruiser The Marian
Epsilon Eridani System, Planet Reach.

Undergoing resupply and refit from long distance patrol.

Ivan Troy Cole, Aged 61, gazed through the viewport into the inky darkness of space. All around him, the three dozen bridge officers of the Marian worked to coordinate the resupplying and refit process of the massive vessel.

"Sir Incoming transmission from Fleetcom on priority channel" yell one of the three communication office. "Patching it through."

Ivan Cole nodded and turned his attention to his personnel com holoprojector while his two co-commanders followed.

The projector winked its green indication light before a swirl of photon resolved into the familiar face of Fleet Admiral Harper.

"Fleet Admiral, sir!" Saluted Cole as stood at attention.

"At ease Cole" smiled Harper as he gazed on the living legacy of the famous Preston Cole. "Fleetcom just received word from a Sangheili patrol fleet nearby. They found something of particular interest and you are going to be tasked with leading the mission for the recovery of the UNSC Spirit of Fire and the Leviathan class Keyship they found"

"Sir, with all due respect, my fleet and their crew need some R&R, the last fight has severely damaged most of the ship under my command" Replied Cole as he slowly eased up his stance.

Frowning slightly, Harper replied "I heard about that, nasty scuffle. Which is why Fleetcom wants me to inform you that you will be placed in command of the 5th Fleet for the duration of this mission, the ship you are given is this beauty." Harper's hologram shirked and the blueprints of a ship sprung up.

Ivan Cole studies the blueprint with a trained eye and his mouth twitched into a grin as he quickly identify the ship class. "A Mark 2 Astraean class? I thought Fleet com Scrapped the original two Mark with the reason of them being too damn expensive?"

It was Harper's turn to grin. "The spooks at ONI were bored with the peace time and decided to have fun in completing the original Astraean class battleships. They recovered the original structure of the ships from Algolis. Surprisingly the hull of the original ships suffered only minor damage when ONI recovered them. The first one has already completed construction and refit, I'll send you the specs later. Now the name of the ship is Field of Hope and I'm only loaning it to you so please dun scratch the paint."

With that, Harper cut the connection. Ivan shakes his head at the old

Fleet Admiral's weird sense of humor before turning to face his bridge crew. The two co commanders were the first to say anything "Vice Admiral, sir, It's been an honour serving with you" with that the crew snapped to full attention and saluted Cole.

"The honour has been mine" replied Cole as he slowly returned his crew's salute. "Tim, you keep this ship and the crew safe you hear?" Asked Cole as he slowly turned towards the bridge doors.

"I hear you, Troy" smiled the AI of the Marian.

The Vice Admiral stepped into the hanger bay and slowly regarded the assembled crews that had come to pay their respect. A sudden "Aten-Hun" caused them to salute the Cole as he walked towards the waiting Pelican.

Taking one last look around, Cole returned the salute. "Dismiss" said the admiral softly before entering the Pelican. The Dropship slowly eased its rear hatch shut before it's four individual thrust engines roar to life in the cavernous hanger of the Marian.

"This is Tango 398, requesting permission to proceed with Flight plan" said the pilot as she slid the agile dropship into the waiting airlock.

"Tango 398, this Is control, Green light" replied the technician as he shut the inner airlock. The outer airlock cycled open, allowing air and the lone Pelican to dash out into cold vacumn. The pilot of the Pelican slowly orientate the dropship just as a flight of five Mark 2 Sabers slid into escort position around the Pelican.

"Let give the Admiral an Airshow" Yell the flight leader. A cheer sounded through the the com frequency as the flight as one perform elegant maneuvres until they are 2 kilometers from the Field of Hope. Cole look through the viewport at his new ship.

The Astraeus Battleship was an awe inspiring sight, the ship with a length of approximately 2.4 kilometers falls only 62 meters short of the Phoenix class colony ship. Three holes in the front is the only indication of the ships three MAC cannon build into the ship. Hexagonal covers of the six hundred Oversized Archer Mark2 missiles pods that that dotted both side of the battleship hid the incredible firepower from view. Nearly a thousand pulse laser point defense system dotted the massive ship providing an all coverage field of fire, along with 6 recessed deck guns that house the ship's Plasma cannons.

The Pelican approach the massive battleship's hanger bay and Cole admire the partially Forerunner alloy that cover the vessel. Studies into the Forerunner metal have yielded significant results in armour technology, allowing the UNSC to mass produce Titanium-A Alloy armour that contains silver of forerunner metal inside, greatly enhancing the armour's durability and heat resistance. With the incorporation of Forerunner metallurgy, UNSC ships can now withstand a few direct hits before their hull beneath the armour is fully exposed.

Suddenly the Pelican swung into a 180 degrees turn and slowly settle down on it's landing gear. The ramp lowered, revealing the welcoming crew, two lines of Marines stood at attention in front of Cole before

parting to form a path for the Vice Admiral. "Let's get this ship underway" muttered Ivan Cole as he strode into the command elevator that leads to the bridge.

The Field of Hope shudder as it's now completed engine assembly fired up, the docking collars connecting the ship to the orbiting shipyard disconnected. Slowly the vessel cleared the shipyard and began it's way towards where the rest of 5th fleet remain.

"All system nominal, reactor are green at 70% capacity" Reported ops officer Diana as she taps away on her keyboard managing the Field of Hope's large maintenance crew.

The door to the bridge slid open and Vice Admiral Ivan Troy Cole step into the bridge of his new flagship. "Status report" Barked Cole as he walk towards the command table.

"Weapon Green across the board, Sir" replied the weapon officer

"Main engine is online and shake down is almost completed sir, we can use 80% power right now." reported the ops officer

"Navigation system online" reported the ship's AI as she activated the holo-projector to show her avatar. "Vice admiral Cole, I'm UNSC AI construct TYA-one-six-seven-five-dash-eight, you may call me Tanya." The hologram stabilized, showing a female commando with two pistols.

"A pleasure to work with you" replied Cole as he examines the table. Numerous holograms of scale sized UNSC vessel floated above the table representing the numerous ships under Ivan Cole's command.

"This is Vice Admiral Ivan Cole to all ships, prep slipspace drive and lock in coordinates for the Sarum system." Ordered Cole as he flip through the various data provided by ONI. Suddenly he arched an eyebrow. "Tanya, we have Civilian tugs with us?"

"Affirmative, the following data is classified eyes only" Replied Tanya as she beamed the data directly into Cole's eyes. "In addition to the Forerunner Keyship, There is another object that ONI has taken considerable interest in." Whispered Tanya directly into Cole's personal com unit.

Even as he scanned through the report sent by the Sangheili fleet, Cole immediately understood the implication of another Alien technology. Suddenly the projector shifted and Cole was given his second order, directly from the top brass of ONI.

"Right, is the fleet ready to depart?" Asked Cole as he shut off the projector. His eyes were slightly watery as they try to adjust to the sudden change.

"All ships confirmed the coordinates have been lock in, synchronizing slipspace drive algorithm, the fleet is ready sir," replied Tanya as she cocked her avatar's guns.

"Engage Slipspace jump, let's get this over with." Ordered Cole as he settled into his chair. All around Reach, Slipspace portal opened as the new slipspace drive of the human fleet enlarge the micro black

hole into portal to slipspace and disappeared in a brilliant flash of Cherenkov radiation.

UNSC Modified Colony ship Spirit of Fire

Sarum star system, 2563, September, 19th

Holding position above the forerunner Keyship

"Sir, slipspace rupture detected." Announced Serina as she monitor the sensor array on the old colony ship. "Receiving IFF, it's an UNSC Slipspace Probe, receiving transmission from the probeâ€|. Putting it on speakers."

"Spirit of Fire, We are sending reinforcement to reinforce the Sangheili fleet currently patrolling the Sarum sector, Hold position until 5th fleet arrives. Good luck Hood's out"

There was an eerie silence before the bridge crew members erupted into frantic cheers. Even Captain Cutter managed to crack a smile.

Suddenly Serina frown "Captain more slipspace rupture detected!"

"Onscreen Serina, prep weapon, there's no way 5th fleet will be here so soon and notify the fleetmaster of this development" Ordered Cutter as the celebrating mood suddenly fades away.

His caution was rewarded as three dozen Jackal ships emerged from Slipspace directly in front of the Sangheili fleet.

"All Ship Open fire! Protect the Keyship at all cost!" Roared Rtas Vadum over the com channels as the collective Jackal ship attempt to make a beeline towards the Keyship.

Bright blue plasma lanced outwards piercing the weak shield of Jackal ship before melting the tinker parts that were cobbled together to form the bird like Kig-Yar's ships.

Cutter raised an eyebrow at Serina. The AI gave a grin before three MAC rounds slammed into the leading three Jackal ship before the archer missiles detonated along their hull, blowing chunks of metal, atmosphere and jackal out into space.

"Sir, a pair of Jackal ships are getting close to the Keyship!" yell the sensor operator as she try to sort through the chaotic reading flooding her computer.

"Serina bring us in, unlock safeties on the deck guns and open fire!" yell Cutter as he survey the battle from the holo table in front of him.

"Aye Aye sir!" Replied the AI as she pushed the Spirit's Engine the Ship shake with the sudden acceleration before the gryo stabilize the inertial. Even as the massive ship rockets towards the two unsuspecting Kig-Yar ship, twenty two of the original thirty concealed deckgun emerged from the top of the Spirit of fire from their concealed position.

"450mm Shells are loaded and the deckguns are primed, Time for some payback" announced the AI calmly as she ran through what remains of the Spirit of Fire's battered system.

"Fire at will Serina," Ordered Cutter as he surveys the fight between two Sangheili cruisers with 8 Kig-yar Raider. The cruisers were drifting leisurely into the midst of the Kig-yar formation even as pulse laser and small version of covenant plasma torpedo impacted their shields. Suddenly all hell erupted as the cruisers released two plasma torpedo each, smashing half of the Kig-yar ships into molten slag.

The four other ships attempted to flee as they suddenly found themselves out gunned but were strike down as four more torpedo detached themselves from the cruiser pair.

Suddenly the Spirit of Fire shook as her massive deckguns fired into the sides of the two Kig-Yar ships. The 450 mm shells rained upon the tinkertoys like ship, pounding their shields before they detonated along the shields. "Uh-oh" muttered Serina as points of blue lights gathered along the Kig-Yar ships.

More Archer missiles erupted from their missile pods and formed a screen of chaff, shielding the Spirit of Fire from the pulse laser fired by the Kig-Yar, fireballs of nuclear detonation doted the space around the spirit of fire as the missiles managed to intercept some of the lasers.

"Damage report!" Yelled Cutter as alarms sounded throughout the ship.

"Hull breach in deck 14 to 12, sealing bulkheads, Damn Kig-yars, they're trying to hit our starboard armour." Hissed Serina as more lasers slammed into the ship's armour.

"Flip us by 90 degrees, activate the point defense turrets, and concentrate fire on this one" indicated Cutter as he selected the larger of the two Kig-Yar ships. Maneuvering rockets throughout the Spirit of Fire's hull fired, slowly flipping the massive ship to present the top side of the vessel.

"All guns fire!" Yelled Cutter as the colony ship brought its complement of deck guns and tri-barreled 50 mm autocannons to bear. Thousands of high explosive rounds slammed into the Kig-Yar's ship, the silver shield flicker before dying out under the massive hailstorm of rounds.

With the shield gone, the rounds punctured the Jackal ship's hull, detonating inside. Within seconds, the jackal ship was reduced to a debris field. The other Jackal ship attempt to disengage to regroup but a plasma round from a nearby Sangheili frigate detonated the ship's reactor.

"This is like shooting fish in a barrel" joked the weapon officer as he manages the shortsword bombers currently dive bombing another Kig-yar ship.

"Serina get the MAC recharged," whisper Cutter as he observes the remaining four Kig-yar ships jump into Slipspace.

"Expecting trouble Captain?" asked the AI as she worked to carry out the captain's orders.

"Something tells me this is just a recon expedition" muttered Cutter before returning his attention to the holotable, Casualty report scroll across a window, Three Sangheili frigates are disabled, and a lone destroyers was severely damaged, the rest of their ships have sustained minor hull abrasion.

"Something is not right here" muttered Cutter as he continues to study the holotableâ€¢

Meanwhile, Professor Solus Mordin surveys the carnage of the fight. Whoever these being are, they have incredible amounts of technology. The Stealth frigate, a prototype provided by the Turians. Even now, teams of Salarian's STG are attempting to snag a few seemingly surviving ship components that had floated near their ship.

Suddenly the sensor officer, a Turian by the name of Chellick shouted out "General we might have trouble! Detecting a lone vessel on an intercept course!"

General Septimus Oraka gave a slight grow before ordering" Recall the STG team, we are leaving!" the 3 STG team crammed into the airlock even as the frigate race away towards the mass relay. "Sensor which ship was the one that attempted to intercept us?"

Chellick tapped away at his console and put the vessel responsible for their fleeing on display. It was the only ship in the entire purple hull fleet that is a dull grey. From the front it looks like a rifle. The general nodded his satisfaction before the frigate jump away through the mass relay.

Author's Note: Well now the Kig-Yar recon fleet was routed while the stealth frigate built by the Turians got scared away by the Spirit of Fire. It seems each fraction is gearing up for one hell of a fight. Human and Covenant Separatist: 2 fleets; Citadel fleets: 6; Covenant loyalist: 3 (Including the Kig-Yar Scouting fleet). Who's going to win the upcoming slugfest? Give me some votes and I'll consider it.

11. Chapter 11

Chapter 11

Asari Dreadnought Destiny Ascension

Serpent Nebula, Holding position around the Relay known as Relay 314,

Joining in the amassed Turian Fleets.

Matriarch Lidanya paced back and forth between her subroutines, console looking over their shoulders at the reading displayed by their holographic consoles.

"Matriarch, we are receiving coordinates from the Turian Flagship. The Dreadnought Warbringer." Reported an Asari sitting at a holographic console. "Putting it up on screen now."

The main projector of the Dreadnought's CIC shifted and projected the Tactical data of the Turian fleets, as well the five other Asari Dreadnoughts currently escorting the Destiny Ascension.

"Move us into position," Ordered Lidanya as she survey the gathering of citadel fleets. Currently there is already a total of 6 Citadel fleet amassed of them 3 provided by the Turian Hierarchy. "Sensors how many ships are there in total?" Added the Lidanya as she lost count.

"Sensors are picking up a total of 20 dreadnoughts including our own, the Turian have sent a total of 10 Dreadnoughts and the Salarian have 5 and we have the rest. I'm also picking up a total of 145 Cruisers and around 390 Frigates." Reported the sensor officer as she run through the sensor scans with the train eye of a professional.

"Detecting an incoming relay jump, sensors indicate a frigate massed object, Standby" added another Sensor operator as she try to ascertain the incoming vessel's identity. "Identity confirmed, it's the Turian Stealth frigate."

"Hail the Frigate on an open channel, let's see what intel they have managed to gather" Ordered Lidanya as she settle into her command chair.

"Channel open, Matriarch" Reported the communication operator.

"General Spetimus Orake, It's good to see you and your crews have come back in one piece. Did the Salarian managed to gather anything?" Ask Lidanya.

"No, we were spotted before the Salarian STG managed to gather anything remotely useful. So far only pieces of armour and computer chips from destroyed ships, most are already smaller than my palm." Replied the Turian General with a snort.

"Spotted?" Frowned Lidanya" Can you elaborate?" Asked the Matriarch as she began to read the data collected by the frigate.

"One of the ships has plotted an intercept course just as we have deployed the Salarian STG teams. We were forced to withdraw because of that." Replied the General.

Suddenly the com sputtered as another person entered the conversation "Amazingâ€|. Possible breakthroughâ€|. in technology!" Came the distinctive fast talking speech of a Salarian.

"What theâ€|.. Professor Mordin Solus" Roared the Spetimus Orake as he traced the signal. "I'm having a debriefing with the Asari Matriarch and will appreciate it if you do not interrupt."

"Don't understandâ€| technology far beyondâ€| most certainly surpassed our own!" replied the Salarian in an excited voice.

Sighing loudly through the coms, General Spetimus Orake finally relented "Fine what have your team managed to find?"

The holographic projector in both ships' CIC shifted and display what looks like an outdated computer console.

"That? It's probably worth a few thousand credits as an antique!" Laughed Septimus as he examined the hologram.

"No wait" said the Asari matriarch as she frowned as an underlying detail "There's more to it than meets the eye isn't it Mordin?"

"Yesâ€| Crystal compound usedâ€|. Capable of supporting large dataâ€|.. Estimated to increase data storage byâ€|. 150 percent!" Yelled the Salarian excitedly as he shifted the hologram to show the inner working of the computer system. "Another interesting detail" Added the Salarian as he once again shifted the holograms of the two ships. The holograms blacked out and displayed a series of repeating 1 and 0.

"What now? You managed to convert the alien language into binary? Well done on such a feat Professor!" Remarked Septimus Orake sarcastically.

"No â€|.. received directly from the computer system itself." Replied Solus as he slowly calmed down. There was a hushed silence as the participant of the meeting consider the implication involved with such a find.

Breaking the silence, Lidanya said "so we can communicate using computer language. It's not the start we were hoping for â€|. But it's still a start."

"Now that's over I'll be returning to the Warbringer and get the fleets underway" said the Turian General before cutting the com channel. Moments later amassed Citadel fleet began their slow jump arrangement to pass through the Mass relayâ€|..

UNSC Modified Colony ship Spirit of Fire

Sarum star system, 2563, September, 19th

Awaiting arrival of the reinforcing 5th fleet.

"Captain something is coming in through the alien artifact" reported Serina as the Spirit of Fire's sensor picked up incoming echoes. "Echo profile suggest the Alien race that had a nasty run in with the Covenant Loyalist and they brought friends lots of them!"

"Alert the fleet, charged up our MAC gun and arm archer missile silos F through G. ETA on the unknown fleet's arrival?" Asked Cutter as he settled into the command chair with a cup of the dwindling coffee supply in hand.

"Judging from data, I'll put the ETA at approximate 8 minutes. Mac guns are charge is holding at 60% and charging at 6% per minute. Reactors power flow is dropping towards 40% critical low limit." Reported the AI as she examine the ship which was her physical body.

"Captain incoming transmission from the Shadow of Intent!" reported

the com officer as he put the transmission on the tactical screen.

The Sangheili vessel's control room appeared and the massive towering Sangheili Fleetmaster Rtas Vadum appeared.

"It seems we have some uninvited guest Human, move your ship near the Keyship, I'll deal with these arrogant newcomers."

"Very well, Serina do it." Said Cutter before the com channel was cut.

The Colony ship began pulling away from the Sangheili fleet it's engines flaring blue as it move into position above the Forerunner Keyship. There was a errie silence as eight minutes ticked by on Cutter's antiqued clockwork watch.

The unknown fleets arrived with no detectable flash of light and a massive combined Citadel fleet emerged around the Mass Relay.

"Captain, I'm detecting an open com channel from the Shadow of Intent" reported Serina as she began to scan and catalog the unknown fleet.

"Put it on speaker Serina" ordered Cutter as he assessed the massive fleet. All throughout the fleet were ships of different designs, suggesting either different fractions or races.

The deep voice of Rtas Vadum emerged from the ships speakers. "This Rtas Vadum Fleetmaster of the Covenant Separatist. State your intention or we'll open fire."

There was an errie silence through the com channels as no response was emited. Suddenly, "Captain, Fleetmaster, I'm receiving a large data package from the unknown ships. It's in binaryâ€| Translating" reported Serina as she began converting the computer language.

"I see, it's a translation package of their languages. Along with some particularly well hidden viruses which have been isolated." Reported the AI microseconds later. "Replaying the Fleetmaster's transmission in their language"

The Com channel was filled with the alien's language as Serina translated and transmit Rtas's original transmission. There was a full 5 second delay before a transmission was transmitted by the unknown.

"This is Asari Matriach, Lidanya, in charge of the Dreadnought Destiny Ascension. We come in peace. We are hoping to establish relation with your race." Responded a female voice through the communication channel.

However before a reply can be transmitted, alert sensors blared throughout the bridge. "Captain detecting multiple incoming slipspace ruptures." The tactical hologram shifted and show multiple greenish white portal that open at the edge of the system.

"Awww shitâ€|.." cursed a crewman as more Covenant vessels emerged from the portals.

CSN Shadow of Intent

Sarum system

In the middle of diplomatic talks.

"Fleetmaster multiple slipspace ruptures detected. It's not the Human 5th fleet." Reported the sensor minor.

"Receiving incoming audio transmission" reported the com officer.

"This is the Covenant Loyalist Assault Carrier High Charity Renewed, we lay claim to this system and all infidels shall burn before the us." Came the unmistakable voice of a San'Syum. "The Gods' will be Done!"

Before the com channel disconnected. Rtas Vadum roared with rage and snarled into his personal com channel "All ship Charge weapons! Target those Loyalist and fire at will!"

"What! Wait I'm sure we can negotiate a peaceful solution" come the voice of the Asari Matriarch.

"They will not" Snarled Rtas Vadum as he diverted his attention to the Matriarch Lidanya. "They are religious fanatic that believe a superweapon on a massive scale to be a path of transcendence."

"I'm sure they can be reasoned with!" replied the Asari with a slight hesitation before determination steeled her voice. The com channel to the Asari dreadnought cut out and the kilometer long ship move itself into the middle of the two opposing fleet.

"Fleetmaster the 'Asari' is broadcasting on an open frequency." Reported the com officer as he furrow his eyes at the signal.

"Foolish" was the only comment that Rtas spat out. "Helm full power to engines, place ur between those foolish creatures and the loyalist!"

They was a nod of acknowledgement before the Shadow of Intent's massive engine assembly fired quickly catching up to the Asari dreadnought. Even as the Assault Carrier chased after the Destiny Ascension, the Asari Matriarch broadcast on an open channel.

"This is the Asari Dreadnought Destiny Ascension, please stop surely we can negotiate this without raising our weapons?" asked the Asari hopefully.

There was a minute of silence as the loyalist fleet stopped raising the hope in the Asari before they spun and presented their boardside. Bright red motes of plasma gathered as they prepare to fire.

"Evasive maneuvers!" shouted the Turian general on the secure com before a large shadow covered the Destiny Ascension. The bolts of plasma splash across the shield of the massive Assault carrier Shadow of intent, causing it to flicker as it withstood the bombardment of 8

plasma torpedoes.

"Return fire!" snarled Rtas as the ops officer reported the drain in the shield system. The was moment of inactivity before bright purple molts light gathered as the fore hull of the Shadow of Intent, before the capacitors discharged the massive amount of stored energy. The beam of photon erupted from the ship's energy projector neatly slicing a Loyalist CCS battle cruiser in half.

"Confirmed kill fleet master!" reported the sensor officer even as 6 bolts of plasma torpedo detached from the ships side and hurled into the 2 destroyers in the small fleet. The destroyers' shield flashed and flicker as they repelled the first two torpedoes before the final one gutted them in the command center. Both ships' running light flicker before dying, dead in space.

Not to be out done the remaining Separatist fleet opened fire, filling the space between them and the loyalist with a wall of plasma. The CCS battlecruisers fired their energy projectors seconds later, holy white-blue streams of charged photons cutting into the ranks of the loyalist fleet as their shields died from the intense plasma bombardment.

On Rtas tactical screen, 30 of the loyalist vessels flickered out as the tactical officer marked them out of the fight. "Numbers of ship left?" growled Rtas as he examined the fight.

"420 of varying classes!" reported the sensor officer. "They out number us 6 to 1"

"Then it's a fair fight" whispered Rtas as he sent orders for a few ships to reposition.

There was a sudden sensor alarm before 4 more loyalist ships detonated in balls of flame, their reactors holed by the light MAC rounds. "Contact the human shipmaster" ordered Rtas as he nodded his approval of the human's support fire.

"Fleetmaster" greeted Cutter as he examined his own tactical hologram.

"Any response from your boarding party human?" asked Rtas as he selected another loyalist ship for destruction. Suddenly the Assault carrier shook as a nearby battlecruiser detonated in the loyalist return fire.

"One message, hold them off for 10 minutes." Replied cutter as his ship took a stray pulse laser in the front.

"10 minutes? Very well human" As his mandibles split into an equivalent of a smile.

"Fleetmaster! The unknown fleet is moving to engage the Loyalist!" Shouted the sensor officer as he place the view on screen.

The hologram show hundreds of frigates charging the loyalist their small mass accelerator firing rapid bursts at the loyalist. The shields of the loyalist fleet simply shrugged off the incoming barrages from the frigates and redirected their point lasers at them. Multiple fireballs bloomed as dozens of frigates detonated as their

core was breached.

The Dreadnoughts and cruisers that stayed behind opened fire, their larger rounds smashing into the shields but doing no damage what so ever. "Pitiful" thought Rtas as his fleet fired another barrage of plasma torpedoes.

General Septimus Orake growled as he watched dozen of Turian frigates detonated under return fire of the enemy lasers. "All capital ships fire at will!" the dreadnoughts and cruisers under his command responded band he watched with disdain as the rounds smashed into the enemy shields doing no damage to the hull.

"General I suggest we concentrate fire on one ship at a time" came the fast talking voice of a Salarian. "It may hasten the lowering of the enemies' kinetic barriers."

"Very well all capital ship target this vessel!" ordered Orake as he highlighted one of the enemy's destroyers. The concentrated fire of the Citadel fleet smashed into the destroyer, its shields flicker and died before the barrage even completed.

"Sir, the frigates are in optimum range for their Disruptor torpedoes, they are requesting permission to use them!" reported the tactical officer as he filter through the data on his console.

"Give them the go ahead. Retarget, this one." Muttered Orake even as dozens of the enemy vessels detonated under the other fleet's combined fire. "Status of the Destiny Ascension?"

"Lightly damaged, some of the plasma bled through her kinetic barriers when the large ship cover her!" reported the sensor officer.

The General winced as another dozen of frigate went up in spectacular fire balls. The surviving frigates launched their loaded torpedoes at the enemy vessel and turned tailed to prepare for another pass.

The torpedoes flew the distance even as accurate pulse laser picked them off. Of the 300 fired, only a disappointing 40 got through and detonated on the enemy shields. The warheads exploded, their unstable mass effect fields destabilizing and collapsing the enemy shields in seconds. A sudden Bright beam of light filled the screen before one of the Turian Dreadnoughts detonated from its holed mass effect core.

Yelling an unintelligent curse, Orake nodded to the com officer. There was a delay before thousands of citadel ships arrived enmassed through the mass relay poised for a fight.

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"By the Forerunners," muttered a crew member as thousands of ships from the citadel fleet poured into the system. Rtas nodded with understanding, the sheer amount of ships were stunning.

"Fleetmaster! Detecting incoming slipspace jumps!" roared a sensor officer to be heard over the cries of report flowing through the air.

"More Brutes?" Growled Rtas as he return his attention to the tactical screen.

"No, slispace signatures are not a match! Wait incoming transmission! Putting it on screen." Replied the officer.

"This is Admiral Ivan Cole of the UNSC 5th fleet to all the loyalist bastard in this system, welcome to your worst nightmare!" As the transmission ended, 900 individual slispace portal opened, dumping the human reinforcement into the already crowded star system.

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"This is Admiral Ivan Cole of the UNSC 5th fleet to all the loyalist bastard in this system, welcome to your worst nightmare!" said Cole over the com channel as he appraised the situation. "All ships engage at will!"

Author's note: well all party members are present and accounted for, time for the mayhem to begin!

12. Chapter 12

Chapter 12

Asari Dreadnought Destiny Ascension

Positioned around the Relay 314's receiving relay.

Currently engaged in long range bombardment of unknown fleet.

"Matriarch! More ship coming from those blue-white portals!" yelled the asari manning the sensor console before the galaxy map shifted showing a fleet of 900 ships pour through.

"Incoming transmission from the new arrivals, the codex is translating" reported the communication officer as she put the transmission on speakers.

"This is Admiral Ivan Cole of the UNSC 5th fleet to all the loyalist bastard in this system, welcome to your worst nightmare!" came the voice.

"Matriarch detecting multiple high electromagnetic spikes!" reported the sensor officer before the view of the new arrivals flashed with lights. Thousands of 600 ton projectiles filled the space and slammed into the Loyalist ships' energy fields. The fields rippled under the barrage of immense kinetic energy before finally shattering and leaving the hull under it exposed.

Seconds later a barrage of Heavier 800 ton tungsten alloy rounds erupted from muzzle the Marathon Cruisers and the sole Astraeus class Battleship. The round smashed through the defenseless Loyalist ships, gutting almost 2 ships with one shot due to the tightly packed formation of the Brute fleet. Seconds later, millions of missiles erupted and slammed into the survivors of the MAC barrage.

"By the goddessâ€|" swore the sensor officer as the sheer amount of missile caused the tracking system of the Asari dreadnought to crash.

"Get the sensor array back online! We can't shoot our target without those data!" ordered matriarch Lidanya as she watch her bridge crews of asari doing their best to keep the Dreadnought in one piece.

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Admiral Ivan Cole paced the bridge of his Astraeus class Battleship, as the tactical data displayed the decimated Loyalist fleet. "All ships, lock on Mark2 Archer missiles and target the heavy capital ships and fire at will, take them out before their shields recharge!" ordered Cole.

"Missiles armed and green across the board admiral." Reported Tanya as she projected her avatar on the holoprojector near the tactical table. "Missiles away" Multiple thumps echoed through the ships as 36000 Mark2 Archer missile left their silos. "Impact in 15 seconds" reported Tanya as she constantly calculated the change the flight path of the missiles to avoid the laser fire.

Of the one hundred and fifty thousand missiles fired, 145000 reached their separate targets and detonated, micro suns flared into existence as the three compacted nuclear fusion warheads detonated in each missiles super compressing their fusion materials before blowing outwards at incredible speeds. Hundreds of ships disappeared in the ensuring firestorm in space only to reappear as cooling globs of molten metal.

"217 Covenant ships of various classes confirmed destroyed or disabled." Reported Tanya as she reloaded her twin pistols. "Archer missiles silos reloads completion in 15 seconds." She added.

"Good," said Ivan as he survey the debris of the covenant vessels. "Retarget the other ships, starting with that Assault carrier that survived." Said Cole as he tap the hologram of Loyalist flagship.

"Incoming return fire from the Loyalist!" warned Tanya as 366 plasma torpedoes emerged from the nuclear firestorm. "All ships brace for impact!"

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"General our sensors are back onlineâ€|" reported a Turian crewman as he works furiously to recalibrate the warships delicate sensor arrays. "â€|..With the patch from the Salarians, our sensors should be fine nowâ€|.. they were overloaded when the new contacts fire 150 thousand missiles simultaneously"

"Fine, status on the enemy fleet?" growled General Septimus as he paced around the CIC with no intention of listening to the technical details of the sensor.

The crewman tapped a few buttons before the tactical map shifted with updates from the sensor arrays. "Sensor readings indicatedâ€| the

crewman swore slightly in his native colony language before glancing apologetically to the General "approximately 54.25% of enemy vessels disabled or destroyed."

The shock on the Turian crew was undeniable. Even with so many of the Citadel ships, taking down one of these unknown hostile's ships was a major achievement and yet a race with only a fleet of 900 ships decimated the enemy in 1 swooping blow.

"Get me a line to the Destiny Ascension and the Advancer." Whispered Septimus as he sat down in his command chair.

"Channel open sir" reported the com officer as he tapped the unique frequency of the two ships.

"Matriarch Lidanya, Fleet commander Pehlan," greeted Septimus as he look at their holo-projection on a side display. "I hope to have a meeting in this situation in light of the recent development in this battle"

"True, amount of missiles fired from the new arrivals have overloaded our sensor arrays." Muttered the Salarian commander in the Salarain's unique fast talking method.

"Maybe now the Turians will seriously reconsider to letting them join the Citadel?" suggested the Matriach Lidanya as she tilted her head slightly in Septimus's direction.

"Indeed, the power shown by these new fraction are indeed amazing" agreed the Salarian "It will be most beneficial to us if they are willing to share their technologies advancements when they join the Citadel."

"You can't be serious?" asked Septimus as he make the equivalent of a turian's shock face. "Look at them! They are savages with insane amount of fire power!"

The Asari frowned slightly at the Turian's statement "I thought the Asari Republic will handle the diplomacy, not the Turian Hierarchy" replied Lindanya as she put the emphasis on the word 'diplomacy'.

"I'm sorry to say we won't be joining you little group" came the smug voice of a female speaking in perfectly translated Asari language.

"What the? who is this?" Growled the Turian as he waved his hand at the com officer to start a trace.

"Tsk! Tsk! Naughty, naughty." Came the reply before the holographic terminal of the com officer locked down. "No use trying to break the encryption on it, not in this lifetime, anyway. As I was saying, We will not be joining your so call citadel council."

"Who is this?" ask Lidanya as she lean forward.

The holoprojector shifted slightly before adding an additional person to those already gathered, it show a alien that bare high similarities to the Asari. "UNSC AI construct SRN-Zero-Zero-nine-seven-dash-eight, codenamed Serina." Smirked the

Artificial Intelligence.

There was a hushed silence in the bridge of the three dreadnoughts as the crews stopped and stare at the avatar that suddenly appeared on the galaxy map. The Turian was the first to recover "Artificial Intelligences? Those are outlawed in Citadel space!" roared General Septimus as he glared at Serina. If looks are bullets, Serina would have been Swiss cheese by now.

"Charming." Remarked Serina with as much sarcasm she could muster. "You must be really popular with girls on your planet." As she return a withering glare back at the Turian. "Now the reason I crash this little party of yours is to inform you that we will not be joining the Citadel, not if what your pass history are to go by."

With the message delivered the AI disconnected from the three dreadnoughts system leaving the Citadel's main members speechless. As the tactical map shifted back, the hostile unknown fired a wall of plasma torpedoes, heading for the new arrivals. "I hope they and their damn AIs burn in hell for this" muttered the General Spetimus only to be disappointed to see bright golden energy shields flare into existence, blocking most of the plasma, minimizing the total damage to the UNSC fleet.

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UNSC Modified Colony ship Spirit of Fire

Sarum star system, 2563, September, 19th

Guarding the Forerunner Keyship.

"Captain, Vice Admiral's message has been delivered" reported Serina as she gave a snort of amusement at the poorly defended networks of the Citadel capital ships. "Incoming return fire on Admiral Cole's fleet!" yelled Serina as she detected the massive wave of plasma heading for the human fleet.

"Time until impact?" asked Cutter as he shift the holographic table trying to find a way out for the fleet.

"Imminent sir" reported Serina somberly as the wave of plasma wash over the human fleet. She frown suddenly as she detected anomaly readings. "Sir picking up new energy signatures from the ships in 5th fleet!"

The video camera zoomed in on a lone destroyer that suddenly emerged from the wall of plasma, completely unscathed, a bright golden film of energy protecting it from the scorching hot plasma.

"Holy shit, they got energy shields!" exclaimed a crewman as they rest of the bridge burst out cheers. The plasmas dissipated and the 5th fleet remain mostly unharmed, with only 25 ships destroyed or disabled.

"Detecting slipspace ruptures!" warned Serina as the blue white portals opened in front of the Loyalist fleet. "The surviving enemy are retreating sir!"

"Good, can you still contact the boarding party? They have been

silent since the fleet battle began." Replied Cutter as he shifted his focus onto the men and women stuck in the Forerunner Keyship.

"Negative sir, all attempts to contact them have failed," Reported Serina as she attempted to contact the boarding party on all UNSC channel. "Sensor data suggest that a board electromagnetic spectrum interference surrounding the Keyship, I cann't even begin to pick out the team's signal." Added the AI with a slightly worried look before the look disappeared, reverting to her normal clam expression.

"Then Lord help us all if they fail to secure the vessel from the rampart AI." Said Cutter as he reopened the files on the Forerunner ship given to him by Fleetmaster Rtas Vadum. "That ship have the firepower to annihilate us if it so much as choose to."

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UNSC 1st Platoon of 1st company

Sarum Star system, 2563, September, 19th

Currently outside the Bridge of the Forerunner Keyship.

"Covering fire!" Yelled Lieutenant Sanders as another pair of Sentinel Enforcers fell from the ceiling and engaged the Marine forces in a cat and mouse chase through the corridors. Two squad of Marines complied and fired their weapons on the sentinel pair, distracting them momentary.

"Heavy weapon teams move up! Get those bastards in the ass!" Ordered the Lt as he and his squad of marines slowed down behind cover and fired out at the Enforcers, sparks show where a few lucky shot managed to penetrate the energy shield of the Enforcers but doing very little damage over all. That was until a heavy weapon team managed to set up a M41 Light AntiAircraft Gun. Hundreds of 12.7x99mm rounds spat out literally tearing into the Enforcers sending chunks of them everywhere. One enforcer fell after a sustain burst before its companion turned around and opened fire, blasting them team manning the guns to shreds.

Bodies flew through the air as the missiles from the enforcer detonated. Suddenly, a green blur moved in and grabbed the still intact M41 LAAG, ripping it of the tripod stands before the M41 spun up and began to spit more rounds at the second Enforcer. Suddenly a blue-white orb flew through the air, before latching onto the back of the Enforcers when it landed. There was a sudden whine before the orb detonated into a shimmering field of white hot plasma, melting through the thick armored hide of the enforcer. "Where the hell did that come from?" yelled Lt Sanders as he reloaded his Assault Rifle in preparation for the next pair of Enforcers. "Covie grunt that snuck on board the Spirit when we got caught in a duel with that Covenant destroyer." Replied Douglas as he reloaded his spent Rocket Launcher. There was a flash followed by the loud crack of a frag grenade detonating in midair. "Sorry to break the chi-chat boys, but we got company; Goldie said they are the last pair." Shouted Spartan 130, Alice as she revs up her M41 LAAG.

"How's the progress on the door Doc?" yelled Sanders as he fired off another burst from his AR "We cann't keep this up all day" as the

last pair of Enforcer started to tear into the Marine squad unfortunate to be just beneath the gigantic robot pairs' drop point.

"Almost there, just give me a few more minutes!" shouted back Anders as her finger typed and slashed furiously across the holographic control in her battle with the Forerunner AI to open the doors to the bridge. "Damn it, this AI is starting to tick me off." Muttered Anders as another line of encryption has been added to the already formidable firewall.

"Allow me," said the Golden sentinel as it hover above Anders and fired a small bright blue beam at the holographic console, immediately eliminating two third of the encryptions, "I suggest you finish decryption before the Rogue AI can recover" before the sentinel return its focus on helping the Marines deal with the Sentinel enforcers.

"Got it!" yelled Anders as she got the last line of encryption before the new line was finished. The gigantic Metallic blast doors hissed and slid open, revealing a room in a large area. In the far end of the wall, a bright red casing of the monitor shone, reanimating as the rampart AI return to original casing. Anders only have a split second warning before she jumped out of the way, A bright red beam blasted the space she was standing moments before. "Could you a little help here!" she yelled as she took a few potshots with her M6D Magnum pistol. The 12.7mm High Explosive semi armor piercing rounds struck their target and detonated in small puff of flash.

"Do you mean to blind me?" asked the AI mockingly as it sent another beam of laser at Anders, only for it to be blocked by a green Armor figure. A bright golden field surrounded the Spartan as his suit's Energy shield struggled to block the intense beam before giving out. What remains of the beam struck the Spartan's already dented armor, the reflective coating flaring brightly as it did its job. The Spartan stood for a few seconds before collapsing.

"Douglas!" yelled Jerome as he furiously switched target for his M6 Spartan Laser. The targeting laser stayed on the AI's casing, before a bright laser lashed out, hitting the AI and melting its outer casing.

"You are the child of my makers. Inheritor of all they left behind. You are Forerunner. But this vessel is mine!" screamed the AI as it attempted to charged up another shot. Even as the eye glows with energy another red beam struck again, and plasma could be seen venting from the AI's casing.

"Go to HELL!" yelled Jerome with cold fury as he took aim at the Monitor once more. Before he could fire, a beam from the monitor hit him, throwing off his aim, the bright red beam traveled the distance before neatly melting a small hole in the forerunner metal.

"Whâ€|.atâ€|...haveâ€| yâ€|ouâ€|..dâ€|oâ€|nâ€|e" before the light from the monitor dimmed. The AI hung limped in its casing as power slowly stopped flowing to it from the ships fusion generators. Without another word, Jerome dropped his weapon and hurried to Douglas, his brother in arms. The TEAMBIO system warned him that Douglas has suffered slight burns to his chest, making moving him

unwise until the suit's bioform injectors get to work.

"Anders, tell me it was worth it" said the Spartan quietly as he began to open his pack for a can of biofoam.

"Yes it was, this is the controal bridge of the Forerunner ship, we should be able to deactivate the remaining sentinel enforcers." Replied Anders as she hurrily help Jerome insert the biofoam into the injectors.

"Then deactivate them, I got this" growled Jerome as he administer aid to his fellow spartan, Alice came over seconds later, hefting a M41 LAAG.

"We got the last two pair of enforecer around the bridge. Should be smooth sailing from here on out." She reported as she stood guard over them. "The Marines got the worst of it, three squads down. Not counting the wounded"

Jerome winced slightly at the mention of the casualty report before finishing the first aid treatment. "Hows the Lt fairing?"

"A few bruises aren't gonna keep me from doing my duty if that's what you're worry about." Responded Sanders as he walk over to the Spartans, Assault rifle held casually in hi hands. "Without you guys, we would have lost 5 times, hell maybe even 10 times more men to get here. Now lets get into the bridge and seal the doors. No telling when they'll be back" said the Lt as he nodded his head towards the now destroyed enforcers.

There was a stunned silence as the marines filed into the bridge along with the two spartan who carried Douglas gently into the Bridge. Even as the bridge doors hissed shut, Another sentinel Enforecers dropped from another shaft, there was nothing perculiar until its optical sensor blazed red and it began to move into the ship, hiddend until the time was right.

Authors note: Finally done with this chapter. Loyalist got a hell of a whup ass and citadel aren't doing very well in light of Serina's little message service. And the Rampart AI is still free and running around in the Forerunner vessel. Until the next chapter.

13. Chapter 13

Chapter 13

UNSC Astraeus class Battleship Field of Hope

Sarum star system, 2563, September, 19th

Currently regrouping with surviving ships of 5th fleet.

"Casualty reports are coming in admiral" reported Tanya as she holstered her avatar's pistol and materialized a list in her hand. "Thirty nine UNSC vessels of various frigate and destroyer classes are lost with all hands, minimal considering the amount of the enemy return fire. However the Sangheili are worst offâ€¦ counting 12 CCS battle cruiser disabled, 56 frigates and destroyers lost or too damaged to be repaired."

"Jesus" muttered a crewman as he heard the lost.

"And the so call 'Citadel' races?" asked Ivan Cole as he winced slightly at the Sangheili losses.

"Counting 7 of their so call dreadnought still active, 1300 ships of corvette and frigate tonnage destroyed. And the remaining vessels are in various stage of damaged. Most particularly the Asari flagship Destiny Ascension has suffered significant hull damaged even when Shadow of intent shield it from the plasma torpedoes." Said Tanya as she was slightly amused at the citadel's ship classification.

"Anything else?" asked Cole as he scrolled down the casualty list on his holographic interface.

"Yes sir, the ONI prowler Endless Night has just entered the system. Along with all the civilian tugs appropriated for this mission." Replied Tanya.

"Good tell them to begin, and someone get me a direct line to the Spirit of Fire." Replied Cole as he got up and left the bridge.

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UNSC Modified Colony ship Spirit of Fire

Sarum system, 2563, September 19th

Picking up escaped pods.

"Serina anymore escape pods?" asked Cutter as he rubbed his eyes to clear the tiredness from his eyes. The Spirit of fire has spent hours after the battle to help pick up the many escape pods that dotted the human side of the battlefield. Most of their occupants were safe as the pods' minor energy shielding deflected debris that impacted them.

"That should be the last of them, be advised with the survivors we brought on board, the atmospheric system will be severely taxed to maintain a low CO₂ environment. I recommend dropping them off at other ships." Replied Serina as she flint through the ship's cyberspace monitoring and directing the rescue operation currently underway.

"Good, let's make one more sweep to be precise, thing right now are way better than when the Prophecy Incident" said Cutter as he closed Serina's account on the fleet's casualty.

The AI winced slightly at the mention of the incident before replying "Aye Aye sir."

"Captain incoming transmission, it's from the 5th fleet flagship!" reported the Com officer as the transmission was patched through. The Main viewscreen blacked out before showing the standard bridge layout of UNSC capital ships.

Captain Cutter Snapped to attention along with the rest of the bridge

officers when they noticed the Vice Admiral insigne on Ivan Cole's Shoulder patch. "Vice admiral Sir" saluted Captain Cutter.

"At ease, all of you. Seems like I found out why my father placed you in command that particular old girl" smiled Cole.

"Sir?" asked Cutter as a confused expression appeared on his face.

"Maybe when we're in private, captain. Now status report" ordered Cole as he pulled up the schematics design of Spirit of fire from his own ship's databank.

"Port side will require several months in dry dock, Main reactor currently holding at 38 percent. Weapon ammunition currently at 15 percent. Considering what this ship been through, we're right as rain." Said Serena with a hint of sarcasm before Captain Cutter can reply. The AI gave a slight huff of annoyance as if she wasn't pleased of being left out.

Raising an eyebrow, Cole continued "That AI better not be unhinged" as he purposefully avoid the term Rampant. He was well aware that the Spirit of Fire was equipped with among one of the first generation smart AIs during the human and Covenant war.

Huffing slightly in annoyance, "I'm not 'unhinged' as you so kindly put it. And Dr Anders can prove it." Replied Serina with a slight frown.

Captain Cutter cut in before anything gets out of hand, "Sir the Spirit of Fire is basically crippled, we have no means of entering Slipspace without a new replacement Slipspace Drive. Ours was sacrificed in order to prevent the Covenant from getting their hands on Forerunner warships."

"Alright I'll have a slippespace drive retrieved from the wreckages allocated to your ship." Replied Cole as he snapped the com off.
"This is going to be a long day."

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UNSC Marathon Mark II cruiser Defiant

Sarum star system, 2563, September 19th

Recovering critical technology from destroyed ships.

Captain David Anderson sighed as his cruiser one of the most powerful ships class built by human hand plow through the remains of destroyed ships, salvaging and removing critical technologies from them. The ship's engineers have already returned from the Loyalist warship wreck, the control circuits for the highly advanced plasma cannon and energy projector removed and the weapons themselves were forcefully dismantled with a carefully controlled series of C12 explosive.

"Tell me this isn't going to use up time that can be better used hunting down Covenant Loyalist."

The holoprojector next to Anderson sputtered into life as the ship's

AI, Harrier, activated the device. "No sir, we are currently tasked to remove all the critical components from all destroyed warship for both logistics and intelligence purpose."

"Cut me the ONI wants more intel bullshit. Harrier" growled Anderson as he sat up straighter in his captain's chair. "If they wanted intel so badly they would have ordered their prowler corps to gather it themselves."

"Aye sir, it was to ensure the other race doesn't go combing through the covenant wreck and discover how to build energy projector." Grumbled the AI before a ping drew his full attention. "Captain, incoming orders from the Field of Hope."

"On my datapad." Muttered Anderson as he attempt to refocus on the task at hand. The data was received and unlocked after Anderson undergone he specialized retina scan. The blackout faded and displayed Ivan Cole's order . "Harrier pull the engineering teams back and scan for any still active slipspace drives from these wreck."

"Recalling engineering team." Replied Harrier as he sent a cryptic and short message to the Chief Engineer Daniel. "Daniel replied that his team will be aboard in 15 minutes after they are done with the last plasma cannon. Activating Sensor grid and beginning scansâ€¦ bingo. Detecting 3 active slipspace drives form the wrecks."

"Only three?" asked Anderson as he raised an eyebrow. "Ships classes? We need one to replaced Spirit of Fire's missing drive."

"Two of the intact slipspace drives are rated Destroyer class. And one of them belongs to a Separatist ship. The last oneâ€¦ Oh my." Said the Ai as it ran scan to reconfirm the location of last Slipspace drive. "The last drives belongs to an Assault carrierâ€¦ A loyalist Assault Carrier with intact atmosphere and secondary reactors."

"Great just great." Replied Anderson with a hint of sarcasm in his voice. "Maybe we should grab the bananas in our stock and toss them at the apes."

"Sir?" asked a nearby crewmen, unfamiliar with the joke.

"Nevermind, Harrier tell the Marine contingent to stand by on the hard dock bay. We'll drop them right into the mess." Ordered Anderson.

"Aye sir, both regiment commanders acknowledge your orders." Replied Harrier as he finished relaying the order. "And Chief Engineer Daniels team is aboard."

"Plot course for that Assault carrier, and give me a hard dock procedure on its hull. Let's get this over with." Ordered Anderson a he look up the scans of the assault carrier. The sensors indicate that the ship in question had its engine blown out by a lucky Archer missile and the energy fluctuation of its reactors fried its weapon and shield control circuit. "Lucky breakâ€¦" Muttered Anderson as he scrolled down the list.

"Course plotted and locked in." Reported Harrier as he raced through

the ship's extensive system. The mark II Marathon class ship, standing at a whopping 2.38 kilometers accelerated towards the drifting Assault Carrier its golden shield flickering as it repelled small debris out of its path.

As the ship cut its engine, thruster throughout the hull fired micro burst slowing the massive ship and positioning it above its intended target. "Captain the ship is in position."

"Alright get the boarding underway, I want to be away from those monkeys as soon as possible." Ordered Anderson as he opened a personal com to the Marine commander.

"Major Derek Izunami, here sir, you wanted something?" asked the one of Regiment commander as he double checked his weapons and armour.

"Yes major when you board that ship, secure the slipspace drive so our engineers can removed it for the Spirit of Fire." Replied Anderson with a slight smile, knowing the major, he probably had some unauthorized tactical surprises for the Brutes already.

"Anything else sir?" asked the Major before slotting the battery pack into his MA6-P Plasma rifle with a satisfying 'click'.

"Kick some ass for me." Answered Anderson before cutting off the channel.

The Marathon Cruiser shudder slightly as the final burst of thruster brought the ship into position. Energy through the shield system shifted as the ship's AI diverted the energy to project an enclosed shield in space between the Defiant and the Assault Carrier. Seconds later a purple shaft of light activated beneath the Marathon pumping breathable atmosphere in before entire platoons of Marines descended towards the Assault carrier's hull their magnetic boots locking them onto the hull.

"Regiment in position sir" reported 2nd lieutenant Jacob Taylor. "Breaching Charges are ready as well. Awaiting you command sir"

"Right get ready." Ordered Major Derek before turning his gauntlet up and depressing the button. 20 high explosive shaped charge C12 exploded directing their explosive force into the purple silver hull crafting a hole the size of a pelican into the enemy ship. Instantly bright red plasma bolts and spiker rounds shot out.

"Let's Boogie!" yelled Jacob as he and his platoon of marines stepped towards the edge of the hole when the enemy fire slacken a bit. The marines took aim with their MA6P and MA6B rifles before unleashing a hellish return fire at the brutes below. Bright purple plasma and hypersonic bullets slammed into the defending Covenants discharging shields and melting armour and their occupants.

"Incoming!" yelled a marine as a bright green bolt of a fuel rod cannon shot out impacting nearby. The energized plasma inside exploded out wards as its container shattered, overloading the shields of a few unlucky marines before melting them and their armour.

"Get back, Frags!" ordered Jacob as he and his marines started to receive more return fire. The Marines rolled back before throwing M9-HEF Frag grenades down the hole. Multiple detonations signify the their detonation. "Jenkins move up. Periscopes." Ordered Jacob as he and the other Marines prepare their weapons.

Jenkins approached the hole cautiously and peeked inside. All that he could see was the blacken corridor of the ship. He turned to shout an all clear signal before a single particle beam sliced through his knee guard, nicking him in the leg's tendon.

Swearing slightly, Jacob raced forward and pulled the injured marine back despite the man's scream of pain. The medic rush towards Jenkins before administering Biofoam to stop the marine's bleeding. Jenkins relaxed as the biofoam filled the hole and numbed his pain before blacking out.

"Anyone saw where that beam came from?" asked Major Derek as he joined Jacob.

"9 o'clock" replied a nearby marine. "Give or take 10 meters judging from the angle."

Major Derek took note of the marines name and added it to his recommendation for sharpshooter promotion. "Noted son, Jacob you know what to do."

The 1st LT nodded and primed a frag and a smoke grenade. He cooked the frag before throwing both at the assumed position. The Marines charged at into the smoke switching on their thermals before cutting down the survivors.

"All clear sirs!" reported a lance Corporal as he lowered his MA6P. Jacob, Major Derek along with the rest of the regiment descended into the Assault carrier with Heavy weapon teams setting up Portable M41 turrets.

"The fallback point is secured. We got multiple M41 LAAGs covering all the corridors, Brutes will have to walk through a wall of lead before reaching us." Reported the Master Gunnery Sergeants as his team finish the setup of the last M41 LAAG which were then manned by the men of 1st company.

"Good. 2nd and 3rd company on me, the covies loyalist have set up a picnic and all of you boys and girl have been invited for the party crashing. So keep your hands on the trigger and we'll get to have all the food. Now any questions?" Asked Major Derek as he rechecked his MA6P plasma rifle.

There were a few stifled laughs from the two companies before the commanders silenced them with dangerous glares.

Nodding his satisfaction, "Then Move out!" ordered Major Derek as he took point with second Company.

Forerunner Leviathan class Keyship.

Sector 375, known to Reclaimers as the Sarum system, 102745 years, 3 months, 25 days, 10 hours, 2 minutes and 10 seconds after deactivation by rampant ancilla.

In orbit of unknown Gas planet.

Unit 30-29 hovered above the main control terminal translating the language to those more suited to the Reclaimers. Dr Anders the leading reclaimer scientist and 2nd Lieutenant Sanders the military commander were currently with it.

"System scan completed. No trace of the ancilla remains in the system. Reestablishing manual control." Reported the Sentinel before the holographic surface all along the control center lit up. Some showing real time feed of the gas planet while, while other display the ship's systems.

"Status of the Keyship?" asked Anders as she tapped away with her Datapad, vigorously interfacing the device with the Forerunner terminals and translating them into English. When the translation completed she uploaded encryption to the ships system.

"Ship's reactor is operable at 90% efficiency. Shields are currently offline. Weapon system point defense lasers only until reactor are fully online. Main engines. Operable at 25% efficiency, currently incapable of escaping this system. Slipspace translight engine..operable. Communication system online" reported the Sentinel in its monotonous voice as it access the long dormant system of the Forerunner ship.

"Establish contact with the Spirit of Fire." Ordered Sanders as he walk up to a terminal and attempted to shift the view to the last know location of the Spirit of Fire.

"Unable to comply, detecting two thousand nine hundred and 53 ships currently in system. Please delegated the vessel Spirit of Fire." Reported the Sentinel as it bobbed slight in the air as if amused with Sander's order.

"Wait two thousand plus ships? On screen!" ordered Sanders as what remains of 1st platoon took up position on all the entrance to the control center. The walls of the Forerunner control center faded away replace with a holographic representation of the star system. The hologram shows surprisingly very detailed representation of all ship in the system.

"FUCK!" yelled a marine as he spotted the fleet of Covenant vessels currently grouped with a fleet of what appears to be human ships as well as the citadel fleet holding station around the unknown planet. "Covenants! And they brought friends!"

"Goldie contacted this vessel." Ordered Sanders as he tapped the icon representing the Spirit of Fire.

With a stubborn act of defiance the sentinel did not respond to the nickname. It's dumb AI matrix simply choosing to ignore the unofficial name.

"Fine, I get the point, Unit 30-29 please contact this vessel." Said Sander.

The hologram disappeared and was replaced with the view of the Spirit of Fire's bridge. The crews of the ship were in a frantic panic as

the Forerunner AI effortlessly forced the communication channel into the colony ship's system. Serina was not amused as she transferred fragment of her core logic into the Forerunner system.

"I would appreciate it if you did not do that" she said pointedly to the Sentinel.

"Can you put the Captain on the line? We have the Forerunner vessel under our control. But the ship is stuck in this system until the slipspace drive can be repaired." said Sander.

"Receiving orders from Cutter. Here's your orders Lt." replied Serina as she projected the orders into the Lt's eyepiece. The relieve on the Lt's face grew slowly from disgust to all out anger as he read the orders.

"Fine. Unit 30-29, move the ship toward the middle of this fleet." growled Sanders as he selected the Separatist fleet currently shielded by the UNSC 5th fleet. There was a slight shaking before the reactor of the mighty Forerunner ship powered up, flooding power into the ancient systems. There were a few sparks along the engineering corridors as the old systems struggle to reactivate only to be put out by the constructors that flint through the corridors repairing the unmaintained systems.

"Course set and the vessel is underway. Estimate time is 15 minutes reclaimer." Reported the Sentinel as it continued to function in place of the ships original ancilla.

"Whatever" grumbled Sander as he found a place to sit down with the rest of the off duty marines.

Author's Note: Finished the 13rd chapter. Hope ya all like it. And won't the Council race be surprised to see the Forerunner ship emerging from behind the Gas planet. I would like your opinions. Do you guys want a bad fall out between the Citadel council and UNCS/ Separatist? If so I got some ideas on how the most troublesome and arrogant of the citadel race will cause it. So opinions pls. thank you. On and btw for those none too sure of , Ancilla is the Forerunner classification of an AI they are commonly called ancillas no matter if they are smart type like monitor or dumb type like sentinels.

14. Chapter 14

Chapter 14

Turian Stealth Frigate Palvern's Night

Star system of receiving Relay 314

On loan to Salarian STG

"Picking up on the echo again professor." Reported the Turian sensor officer as he manually redirect the sensor grid to home in on the persistent echo using the Salarian upgraded sensor system.

Professor Mordin Solus, leader of this STG, lean over the Turian's shoulder before activating his own Omni-tool. The holographic surface

of the Omni tool sprung into life collecting the new data from the terminal. "Should be enough," muttered the Salarian before moving back to the Galaxy Map where the ship's captain was waiting.

Saren Arterius was not happy. Ever since the arrival of the large number of ship after the battle, his ship has been shadowed by an echo which the Salarian has believed to be another ship. The ship he commanded, Palvern's Night, was the frigate outfitted with the best the hierarchy could offer including the newly develop IES system currently integrated into the ship's hull. It was not even detected by the other ships of the Citadel but with the new fact that this new fraction can follow them wherever it pleases is even more nerve racking for the Turian Specter who had believed the Hierarchy had the best space force the galaxy had seen.

"Sufficient data gathered, should have a visual momentary." Reported Mordin Solus as he inputted the painstakingly gathered data to reveal their unknown stalker. The Galaxy map shifted and turned as it try to shape the inputted data, minutes later though a bizarre looking object was formed and was in no way a ship.

Cursing profoundly in the Salarian native language, Professor Mordin Solus move back to the sensor grid control interface.

Saren was not amused however and ordered visual check of the space nearby. The cameras integrated on the ship's outer hull took pictures of the surrounding space while sensor grid once more scan in the infrared and radar in an futile attempt to detect the stalker. The holograms showing the surrounding space was filled with wrecks of the ships destroyed in battle but nothing unusual was detected. Finally growing tired of this phantom echo Saren snapped out orders: "Enough with this, Professor Mordin Solus we are wasting valuable time, get your STG team into the Airlock and prepare to board one of the wrecks. See if you can find anything useful other than a few computer components" Before the Salarian could argue back, "I'm sure there is nothing here, if there was a ship we would have found it by now. No known ship have the ability to disappear from plain sight." Said Saren, his tone brokering no arguments from the Salarian STG commander.

"Fine.." muttered Solus as he went down to the Hanger to marshal his team into the airlock.

UNSC Prowler, Endless Night

Sarum Star system, 2563, September, 19th

Shadowing the Turian stealth frigate.

Captain Veronica Dare was bored, there was nothing else to describe her current assignment. "Status on the Turian vessel?" she muttered as she took another glance at the view screen to confirm what she already guessed.

"It's chasing its tail ma'am" Reported the Tim, the ship's AI. "At this rate they will probably run into us in 600 and 82 years." Added the AI with a mischievous grin plastered on its face.

Struggling not to laugh out, the Captain check the updated flight pattern of the so call stealth vessel. The vessel had been running

around chasing the echo of the prowler for about an hour already, radar waves put out by the vessel absorbed by the specially treated hull plates of the prowler. She tapped at the screen and replaces the plight pattern data with the schematics of the vessel based from the deep scan data the AI obtain. While normally such a scan will reveal their position, for these aliens it was merely dismissed as an echo as far as Tim could tell from the hacked com of the ship.

"Seem like they have lost interest of their tail." Reported the AI as he noted the change in flight path of the Turian vessel, angling it towards one of the inactive wreck of a Covenant loyalist destroyer. "Shall I change heading ma'am?"

"Alright enough of this game. Bring up to safe speed of the dark limit. And plot a course that put us in front of them. Stand by to drop stealth protocol and send premade message." Ordered The ONI operative as she shook her head at the design of the Turian Stealth ship. The Turian ship itself consisted of what are basically large heat sinks lining its inner hull, containing the heat for the duration of its stealth operation. It was effective â€œ if pitted against UNSC 23rd century thermal sensorsâ€œ. But no way in hell will the electromagnetic field emitted from the ship was in anyway subtle. The ONI prowler and all the other UNSC ship picked up on its EMF signature the moment it had enter the star system, hell even the decades old Phoenix class refitted colony ship picked up on it.

The UNSC prowler which was essentially a converted corvette ranged a laughable 163 meters in length accelerated it's fusion ion drive to 25% of its full power, pushing it ahead of the Turian vessel, the texture buffer that line the hull of the human vessel taking in its surrounding and projecting a similar image on the hull of the stealth ship.

"ETA 30 seconds before we arrive at our destination. Shall I charge up our shield array just in case?" asked Tim as he calculated and plotted the course for the ship with a tilt of his head.

"Not yet, just prepare them for a cold start, no need to let them have a chance to find us before we are in position." Replied Captain Veronica with a smirk on her face. "Let's give them a scare and see if they back off from these Covenant wrecks."

Turian Stealth Frigate Palvern's Night

Star system of receiving Relay 314

Approaching a disabled wreckage of a Disabled Covenant destroyer.

"ETA to the disabled ship?" Enquired Saren as he paced around the CIC intending to join the boarding party on the enemy vessel. Already the special weapons unique to the Specters are strapped to his back ready to unfold from their compact state into deadly weapons.

"Should be about 2 more minutes at current heading." Reported the pilot currently in the cockpit of the frigate, manipulating the holographic interface that controls the ship. "By the way Sir, the engineering team wish to inform you that the heat buildup in the hulls are approaching dangerous level, we need to discharge them after dropping you and the STG team off."

"Fine, discharge the heat in orbit of this gas planet." Growled Saren as he pulled out his assault rifle to recheck the weapon. "Anything on sensors?" he directed the question at the sensor officer as he pulled out the metal block used as the ammo of the rifle. Mass effect weapons fire rounds that are as small as a grain of sand which is cut off from a block of metal and usually needs replacement after 6 thousand shots give or take a hundred.

"Negative, nothing worth noting yet but I can't confirm much since we have to keep our power signature to the bare minimum." Replied the sensor officer as he once more set the system to do another short range scan. Just seconds into the seconds however, a red alert popped up, sending alerts blaring throughout the CIC of the Turian Stealth frigate. "CONTACT! Unidentified vessel estimated 10 thousand meters directly in front of us!"

"On screen!" snarled Saren as he quickly compacted his weapon for storage. The Galaxy map disappeared and was replaced with a hologram of the unknown ship. Its surface was angular, and the surface of the ship appears to be shifting as if adapting to the space surrounding it. Saren's blood chilled as Mordin Solus step beside him and tapped a nearby control. The ship's VI then compared the echoes taken with the unknown ship where the data fits perfectly into parts of the unknown vessel.

"I do believe we have found our stalker." Whispered Mordin quietly to Saren as if aware that something was monitoring their communications. "And they appear to not take too kindly to us trespassing into the unknown ships' graveyard."

Saren was silent for a few moment before his arrogant self reinstated itself. "Do not state the obvious to me professor." Growled Saren as he tapped his personal communication to shipboard channel "All hands Battlestation, I want every weapons armed and aimed at that ship. Divert more power to the kinetic barriers and get me a communication line to that ship!"

The Turian crewmen worked frantically with an efficiency that was brought forth by the Turians' harsh training regime to soldiers that all citizen aged 15 to 30 had to go through. But all was rendered moot when the power supply throughout the ship shut off with the only exception of life support and communication.

"Status! What in Palaven name just happen?" roared Saren as he furiously punched his fist at a nearby dimmed console. But beneath all that rage, a sinking feeling of fear emerged, for whoever was responsible could disable their ship without firing a single shot. There were cries of dismal as each Turian crewmen try to activate their Omni tools only to find them locked out.

"It appears that our systems have been compromised, Omnitools included." Replied Mordin as he activated his own omni tool which glows bright yellow in the darken CIC. "All STG members can still use their omni tools but I recommend limited use, the unknown may attempt to..." his Omni tool then sputtered and went out "shut them down" completed the annoyed Salarian as he attempted to reactivate his omni tool.

There was silence as the Turian crew began to comprehend their

current situation before one of the youngest began to curled into a ball whimpering. Before an amused voice speaking in perfectly translated Turian language filled the darkened ship. "What giving up already? I though the Salarians were more capable than this."

Even as the taunts continue, power was restored to the galaxy map which flared into life, showing the asari looking creature. Saren said nothing but growled at the hologram dimly aware that the AI held their lives in its hand and if there's one thing Saren hates the most is was a usurping race.

"Now nowâ€| I left the life support system alone for a reason." Said the AI as it grinned evilly at the Growling specter. "My captain would like to have a word with the commanding officer of this ship. Saren Articus." The hologram shifted and now display two beings, one is most definitely an AI the other looks almost like an Asari with the exception of long fur running down from the top of its head.

"Saren Articus I presumed," asked Captain Veronica Dare as she studied the Turian. Saren merely gave a grudging nod. "Good. Let me make one thing clear, these wrecks are off limits any attempt to board one will be met with severe repercussions. Do I make myself clear, Specter or should I say Special, Tactic, reconnaissance?" Saren visibly flinched as he struggled to control his temper when the turian common language spoken suddenly switched to Saren's native colony language before giving another grudging nod. "Good, now Professor Mordin Solus of the Salarian Special Task Force, we are well aware of your groups intention for theses wrecks." This statement was punctured with a video that shows the image of the STG group scrambling into the Airlock as the Turian stealth frigate beat a hasty retreat to the mass relay when they were detected by the Spirit of Fire. "Back off unless your government wish for some unpleasant info to come out."

"Information is always welcomed, but some may be more â€| Delicate than othersâ€|." Replied Mordin as he show quickly understood the thinly veiled threat. "We will asked our commander to stop this pursue" lied the Salarian quickly to assure the opposing captain.

Though disbelief was still evident on her face, ONI operative Captain Veronica Dare nodded to Tim and said "Cut them loose Tim. We're done here." The AI merely nodded before giving another mischievous smile at the Salarian and Turian commanders. The CIC suddenly brighten as power was restored throughout the ship.

"Sir, power are restored to all systems!" reported a turian crewmen as he flick through the reports on his now active console. But suddenly the alarms blared throughout the ship.

"What now?" growled Saren as he try to marshal the profound new fear of this new race. The turian who just reported the ship status paled as the new data scrolled through his console.

"We are venting the accumulated heat sirâ€|. With the vents closed." He stammered before Saren sink his fist into his command chair punching through the metal with pure strength. With this the hull of the Frigate will be irreparably radiated, fatally compromising the frigate's stealth systems.

"Set course for the Warbringer, we're just a target without those stealth system" ordered Saren as he raged in the CIC. The defeated Turian frigate fired its engines bringing it on a direct course to the Turian Flagship.

UNSC Prowler, Endless Night

Sarum Star system, 2563, September, 19th

Setting course towards the Gas giant.

"Well that was fun" remarked Tim as he gleefully watched the beaten Turian frigate head back to the Citadel fleet.

The Captain only raised an eyebrow at the AI before turning her attention to the more important task. "Tim, enough with that, get me a scan on that Forerunner ship. See if the new X-ELF system can penetrate those electromagnetic shields. The Vice Admiral wants a thorough scan of the ship to determine if it's safe to haul back to populated system."

"Scanningâ€¦ Nothing, not even a beep from the system. Whatever those Forerunner used to shield their ships it's blocking out our scans." But the good news is it seems the vessel is safe to take back if the received interior scans are to go by." Reported Tim as he read the incoming data.

"Fine let's get out of here our work's done." Ordered the Captain as she settle into what she knew was a long journey. The Prowler disappeared once more from the scanners of every ship in the system before a blue white portal of a slipspace rupture signifies its departure.

Authors note: well done. How it lives up to your expectations. Cause I've already unable to continue this chapter without laughing out. Will put up the chapter 15 preview and full version when I've finished them respectively.

15. Chapter 15

Chapter 15

Forerunner Leviathan class Keyship.

Sector 375, known to Reclaimers as the Sarum system, 102745 years, 3 months, 25 days, 12 hours, 32 minutes and 40 seconds after deactivation by rampant ancilla.

Approaching the predicted location for breaking orbit.

Unit 30-29 shifted through the data passing through the ship's sensor gird, slowly but surely plotting the best possible course to move the ancient Keyship out of the Gas giant's orbit. "Reclaimer Sanders, we are approaching the breaking point of our orbit. Main engines and thrusters will be firing momentarily."

"Alright you heard the AI, on your feet Marines!" Shouted Sanders at the Marines taking a rest in the corner of the control center. The

marines grumbled slightly before they got up, shouldering their MA5B assault rifles into firing position. "Spartans let the medics take care of the wounded. I need you two on patrol."

Jerome and Alice gave green acknowledge lights as they pick up their weapons, their silence signifying how seriously wounded their fellow Spartan was. Dr Anders got up from one of the damaged console that she had fixed, and walked over to the Golden Sentinel currently hovering over the main interface. "How goes the repair process?"

The Sentinel tilted slightly at it sent enquiries to the non-combatant constructor Sentinels currently filling the hallways of the Forerunner Ship. "Main Engines operable at 35% capacity, power levels maintaining at 90%. The constructors have discovered micro fracture in the power conduits connecting the weapons systems to the reactors, current estimate 2 hours and 34 minutes needed to completely seal them. Secondary weapon systemsâ€¢..Operable, shielding is currently at 28% and climbing at 2% per minute." Replied Unit 30-29 in its monotonous voices it dutifully deliver its report.

Suddenly the sensor of the Forerunner vessel blared out warnings as multiple ships began to approach it. "Warning incoming vessels on intercept course!" warn the dumb Ancilla as it attempt to power up the ships weapon system. "Diverting power from main engines to weaponsâ€¢!"

"Belay that, those are probably the civilian tugs assigned to pull this ship back. Lower the shields and let them through" ordered Sanders as he watch the familiar bulky designed tugs move into position throughout the length of the Keyship. One by one the ships attach themselves to the hull of the Forerunner vessel, magnetic clamps finding purchase on the ancient metal.

"Orders confirmed. Receiving stellar coordinates from the leading vesselâ€¢ linking systems for synchronized burst." Replied the Sentinel as it linked with the ships attached to the forerunner vessel. "Firing main engines in 3â€¢..2â€¢..1" all the ships attached throughout the hull of the forerunner vessel fired their fusion drives, slowly but surely accelerating the velocity of the massive Forerunner ship. "Recalibrating calculationâ€¢ estimate 2 minutes before arrive at coordinates."

Human and Covenant ships parted ways out of the course of the Forerunner vessel as they moved to evade the bulk of the 17.85 kilometer long vessel that was slowly approaching the middle of the sphere formationâ€¢

Asari Flagship Destiny Ascension ,

Positioned around relay 314's receiving relay,

Holding formation with the remaining Citadel fleets.

"Status of the ship?" Enquire Matriarch Lidanya as she paced through the CIC dimly aware that she had not rested for quite a long time.

"The mass effect core is currently stable. Kinetic barriers operational at 70.5%, weapon systems are still active. But our hull

have suffered significant integrity lost when some of that energy weapon bled though the barriers." Reported the operation Asari as she red off the console.

"How significant? Can we survive a mass relay transit?" asked the Matriarch as she was unwilling to abandon the pride and Flagship of the Asari fleets. The operation officer transfer the report to the Matriarch's personal omnitool which she read through quickly. Lidanya gave a sad sigh as the reports indicate that the Destiny Ascension will not be able to retreat through the relay with the hull plates of the top of the ship half melted. "Get the Engineers to fix what they can and see if they can repair the damage enough so we can retreat if need be." Ordered the Matriarch as she considered her options. "â€|. Arm the self-destruct system just in case." She said quietly to her XO.

The XO nodded and went to prepare for the worst case scenario.

Suddenly the alarms throughout the CIC blare into life, "By the Goddess what now? Swore Matriarch Lidanya as she head over to the sensor operator.

"Matriarch, the sensors have identified a new ship!" reported the sensor officer as she quickly ran through the data. Her eyes widen at the reading currently flowing across he console. "Sensors reading estimatesâ€|.. the ship in question to be â€|17.85 kilometerâ€|. And still not even a hint of Eezo from any of the ships." Gulped the sensor officer as she continues to scan the sensor data.

The Matriarch was silent even as she contemplates the ramification of a ship that large and with the usage of eezo it was an unbelievable technological achievement. Whoever these races are they have very advance technology that was on a completely different based than those used by the Citadel fleet. The Matriarch's thoughts were interrupted when the communication officer shouted out. "Incoming signals from the Warbringer and Advancer. Putting them through."

The hologram of Turian General Septimus Orake and Salarian commander Pehlan appeared on the holo pedestal, both look obviously in discomfort as they nervously glanced off screen, probably at the sensor data on the new ship. "Still think of them as savages?" asked the Asari as she attempted humor to ease the situation. Commander Phelan was not amused however "Unlikely designed by the race present. Sensors indicate the ship was already here before they arrivedâ€| we only dismissed it as a large Trojan asteroid as there isâ€|. Was no known ship that size ever designed or encountered."

At this, the Turian General obviously perked up. Matriarch Lidanya was suddenly unease at where this conversation will be heading. "So you're saying that this ship was probably not designed by these savages?" Asked General Septimus Orake as attempt to reconfirm what the Salarian was saying. The Salarian commander merely nodded. "Then doesn't that mean we could lay claims to that ship?"

The other 2 commanders stared at that Turian General in shock as if he was mad. Lidanya voiced out their concern "Are you mad? Those ships have more than enough firepower to annihilate us, and you are suggesting we just go over and take a ship that we didn't even know about in the first place?"

"The Salarian said they didn't even design it in the first place, so I would say that it's a fair game. And the Turian Hierarch agrees with me." Grinned the Turian as he suddenly cut the com channel. The Matriarch swore violently as the Salarian commander stared. "Pehlan this is going to hell, we have to stop him before he really gets us in trouble." The Salarian commander did not answer. Suddenly Matriarch Lidanya was worried with the Salaran's silence. "Please tell me you are not considering this."

The Salarian commander looked up at this point, "The Turian does have a point. I'm sorry. The Salarian Union has also the same opinion as that of the Turian Hierarch. There is nothing I can do." With that the channel was cut off.

"By the goddess have they gone mad?" Cursed Lidanya as her bridge crews stared at her. "Com open a channel to all Republic ship, and get me a connection to the Shadow of Intent."

"Channel opened Matriarch." Reported the com officer as it sent hails to the ships.

"All Republic ships, formed up on the Destiny." Ordered Lindanya as she switched over to the Shadow of Intent's communication frequency. "Shadow of intent can you hear me?"

There was silence as the ship's VI translated and send the message. "Destiny Accession, this is FleetMaster Rtas Vadum, what is it?" growled the Shangheili as he was interrupted from his rest.

"Please be warn, I have no control of this situation. The others haveâ€|" was all Matriarch Lidanya managed to say before the Warbringer and Advancer opened a broadcasting frequency.

"The Turian Hierarch and Salarian Union lay claims to this system, all ship from other fraction must withdraw and leave behind all the artifacts in this system. Refusal to comply will result in your destruction." Came the Septimus's voice.

"What madness is this?" growled Rtas as he return his attention to the Asari. "Are they foolish enough to believe they stand a chance in a conflict with us?"

"I cannot speak for their action as the Asari Republic has never use force when it was unnecessary." Replied Matriarch Lidanya as she worriedly glace at the Salarian and Turian ships moving to surround the Asari comparative small fleet.

Fleetmaster Rtas Vadum growled as he glanced at the tactical data that now projected the unfortunate position of the Asari fleet.

"Matriarch move your fleet towards us slowly, I shall guarantee upon my honour as Fleetmaster of the Covenant Separatist that you and your ships shall not be harmed by us." Said Rtas as he made his decision.

"I thank you for your courtesy." Replied the Matriarch Lidanya as she cut off the com channel to the Shadow of intent. "All ship move towards the Separatist fleet, we will seek refuge from this fight." The Asari captains send their acknowledgement before the Asari fleets powered up their engines, pushing their ships towards what remains of

the Sangheili fleet.

Suddenly "Matriarch the Turian and Salarian fleets have opened fire!" shouted the sensor officer as she read through the new data. Seconds later mass accelerator slugs smashed into the kinetic Barriers of the Asari fleet, frigates detonated in balls of fire as their weaker fields were overwhelmed.

"Keep moving, we are almost there!" shouted the Matriarch as a few Asari frigates turned around to buy time for the majority of the fleet. But even before they could finish their turns, bright white beams of energy pierce the darkness of space, cutting a pursuing wolfpack of Turian Friagtes in half. There was a stunned silence before the Turian and Salarian fleet switched targets from the Asari to the Shadow of Intent. Swarms of mass accelerator slugs pounded the ship's shields but they shrugged it off as the slugs were mere annoyance.

Covenant Separatist Assault Carrier Shadow of Intent

Sarum system, 10 years unit into the Age of rebuild

Holding position around Forerunner Keyship.

Fleetmaster Rtas Vadum growled as he glanced at the tactical data that now projected the unfortunate position of the Asari fleet.

"Matriarch move your fleet towards us slowly, I shall guarantee upon my honour as Fleetmaster of the Covenant Separatist that you and your ships shall not be harmed by us." Said Rtas as he made his decision.

"I thank you for your courtesy." Replied the Matriarch Lidanya before she cut off the com channel to the Shadow of intent.

"Fleetmaster the others are firing on the Asari vessels!" shouted the Sensor operator as he screen the data.

"Dishonorable cowards!" cursed Rtas before ordering "Fire the Energy projector, provide cover for the Asari fleet. He watched with satisfaction as a wolf pack of Turian frigate got neatly cut in half by the energy projector. "Ask if the human Admiral can provide a distraction." Ordered Rtas as he switched his attention towards another approaching wolfpack of frigates. The Shadow of Intent barely shook from the hail of Mass accelerator slugs that drummed its shield.

Seconds later, the human's grey hulled vessels release another huge swarm of missiles, directed at the Salarian frigates that are catching up. Detonation filled the path as Salarian Guardian lasers started to fire at the missiles in a vain attempt to save themselves. "Foolish," laughed the weapon officer as he witness the destruction of another wolfpack.

"Indeed. All ship move in. Teach these cowards the meaning of honor" Ordered Rtas as he smiled in anticipation.

Authors notes: Ya probably gonna be bombarded with question after this chapter. A Schim has occurred. But if you check the mass effect wikia, you'll notice the Salarian and Turian have a closer relation. But the Asari dun. So with that in mind this will be the result.

Enjoy. And thanks to RamenKnight for beta reading this.

16. Chapter 16

Chapter 16

UNSC 5th Fleet Flagship, Astraeus Class Battleship, Field of Hope

Sarum Star system, 2563, September, 19th

Awaiting retrieval of Forerunner Vessel.

Vice Admiral Ivan Cole stood in his ship's bridge, the eye of an increasingly frantic tornado of bridge officers that frantically worked to assess the status of the individual ships in the UNSC's fledgling 5th fleet. He watch as the majestic and beautiful Forerunner Keyship approach the formation of human ships currently moving to encircle it and the Covenant Separatist fleet in a protective sphere formation.

He was snapped out of his sightseeing when the ship's AI, Tanya, directly connected into his personal com unit. "Admiral, we got a situation." Reported the AI before she started to play the conversation between the commanding officers of the Citadel fleets before continuing with the com exchange between the Asari and Shadow of intent.

Raising an eyebrow at the AI, Cole marched towards his command chair before taking a seat. Tapping his com unit, he connected to the fleetwide communication channel. "All ships, arm weapons I want Archer missiles ready for cold launch. Tanya, coordinate with the other AIs and get me firing solutions for our MAC rounds."

Tanya nodded before disappearing. One second later she reappeared on her holo pedestal. "Oh before I forget, here's the warning issued by the Salarian and Turian fleets" She added before deactivating her holo pedestal.

"The Turian Heirarch and Salarian Union lay claims to this system, all ship from other fraction must withdraw and leave behind all the artifacts in this system. Refusal to comply will result in your destruction." Came the Septimus's voice.

There was a moment of silence as the bridge crews turned and looked at each other. One of the crewman shouted "I'm pretty sure it should be the other way around dumbass" with the other crewman cheering and whistling at his joke.

"Quiet!" roared the captain of the ship even as he himself withhold a smile of his own, "I'm sorry for the unprofessional behaviour Vice admiral." Added the Captain as he turned to face Cole.

Cole gave a slight shrug before turning his attention towards the tactical table in front of his commander chair. "Begin charging our MACs." Said Cole curtly as he watch Shadow of intent discharging it's energy projector into a wolfpack of Turian's corvette sized frigates.

"Sir! FleetMaster Rtas request we provide a distraction for the Asari's escape!" reported the communication officer as he forwarded the request to the vice admiral.

"Weapons, arm Archer missile pods A through C and target this wolfpack." Said Cole as he selected a gaining group of Salarian Frigates.

"Missiles armed, Sir" reported the officer as he type in the codes to authorise the missiles launchers, a single finger hover above the enter button for the final launch sequence. Down in missile bays, Archer Mark II missiles were loaded into their pods, the efficient auto loading system pushing the missiles in before sealing it. The outer hatches of the pods opened revealing rows of armed Archer fusion missiles.

Cole waited a heartbeat before saying "Fire!" The finger tapped the enter button, sending an electronic signal to the fire control console of each of the missile pods. From the console targeting data from the bridge were inputted into the individual missiles which ignited their advanced fusion ion engines propelling the swarm of 1800 missiles towards the Salarian frigates.

"Detecting energy spike!" reported the sensor officer before the first of the missiles begin to detonate prematurely. "Energy signature suggests the laser to be near ultraviolet wavelength. Not enough to dent our shields but more than adequate to cut through our armour."

"Not fast enough" muttered Cole as the majority of Archer missiles slammed into the Salarian frigates, one thousand six hundred mini suns flared into existence.

UNSC Marathon Mark II cruiser Defiant

Sarum star system, 2563, September 19th

Currently connecting salvaged slipspace drive for testing.

Chief Engineer Daniel and his team of technicians run into the engineering bay of the Defiant where the newly acquired Covenant slipspace drive is currently being mounted on a hastily constructed frame. Power cables crisscross the floor as the hastily fabricated power cables are connected to the captured drive. "Run the simulations! We don't need a ruptured drive!" Yelled Daniel as he quickly sat down at his console, and begin running the hundreds of simulations on the captured drive.

Technicians with even the slightest slipspace expertise were pulled from all over the ship to supplement the already tired Engineer crews. "Chief, the stress simulations for the mount looks good. And the Electromagnets are looking pretty fine even if they aren't design for this." Reported Gregory Adams, one of the leading slipspace Engineer currently in charge of a team of tech working on the mount.

"Good! Now if this drive have not fractures then we got ourselves a second drive!" Shouted back Daniel before he turns back to the console. "Harrier tell me the drive's talking." As the chief engineer demands a status report from the AI.

"She's singing alright. The containment capsule looks good. And the black hole generator is operating at peak efficiency." Replied Harrier as he quickens the diagnostic on the drive by diverting more of his processing power. "Okay she good to be mounted." Reported the AI as the last scan finishes.

"Alright someone get on that crane and mount this thing. And Adam, get your team together and bolt it down, I want it tighter than your wallet!" yelled Daniels as he tapped his com unit to switch channel to the bridge. "Engineering to bridge. Capture slipspace drive is secured, we're bolting that thing to its mount now. You can begin the charging procedure in one more minute."

"Bridge to Engineering, we acknowledge." Came the voice of Captain Andersons as he scan through the report sent to his personal datapad by Daniel. "Get it done, the sooner the better. Things just got a hell lot more complicated out there."

"Got it Davidâ€¦" paused Daniel as he turned on the mic at his console. "Adam get that drive bolted now!" before he return his attention to the bridge channel "You'll get the drive in 30 seconds." Before he switch off the channel. Grabbing his toolkits Daniel muttered as he ran out the door "Something you need to do it yourself."

Elsewhere on the bridge of the Defiant, David Anderson watch as the Turian and Salarian fired another salvo of mass driver slugs at the UNSC fleet currently protecting the Covenant Separatist and Spirit of Fire. "Chief Engineer Daniels reports the drive has been secured, redirecting power from the MAC to the slipspace drive. Charge rising at 25% per second. You still sure this is a good idea sir?" asked Harrier as he delivered his report.

"Get it done Harrier" said Anderson, complete ignoring the AI's question.

"Calculating jump coordinatesâ€¦ Course plotted. Arming Archer missile pods A through J, Helixia Mark 2 autocannons spinned up and ready." Reported the AI as he goes through the tasks quickly. "Hang on to your hats!" warned the AI before he activated the covenant slipspace drive. The Defiant jumped into slipspace only to reappear seconds later above the Salarian and Turian flagship. Immediately lasers start to blast at the golden film of shield hugging the hull of the Human made ships.

"Jump completed. Firing missiles and autocannons" reported Harrier as he activated the weapons. 3000 Archer Mark 2 missile launched out of their tubes heading directly towards the two dreadnoughts. Seconds later hails of 50mm explosive railgun slugs rammed into the kinetic barriers of both ships.

"Status on our drive?" asked Anderson as more ships in the Turian and Salarian fleet started to concentrate fire on the Defiant, causing the ship to shake as mass accelerator slugs slammed forcefully into the shields.

"Covenant drive is offline as expected. Fail safe protocol shut it down the moment the magnetic coils failed. Our own drive is still powered. Warning shields are estimated to fail in 15 seconds."

Reported Harrier as more slugs rammed into the shields. "I suggest we leave quickly."

"Do it. Get us out of here." Ordered Anderson as he watched the missiles quickly crossing the distance between the Defiant and the Enemy flagships. A bright blue portal of slipspace enlarged and swallowed the Defiant into the compressed space of slipspace before dumping the ship right into the middle of the UNSC 5th fleet. Seconds later, the missiles detonated covering the two of the kilometre long dreadnoughts in a large supercombined nuclear fireball. Without their commanders to command the fleet, the Salarian and turians hesitated before their second in command took over marshalling the fleets into a new battle position.

"Captain receiving a hail from the Field of Hope." Reported Harrier as he ran a scan through the ship's system.

"Put it on." Ordered Anderson even as he personally plotted the course for the Defiant to take its place in the sphere formation of the 5th Fleet.

"Anderson you crazy bastard. Well done!" laughed Cole as he watched the destruction caused by the implementation of Anderson's risky maneuverer. "Tanya remind me to recommend him for a Medal of honour after this." Said Cole off screen before he returned his attention to Anderson. "Right, that should keep them busy for a while." Grinned Cole as the Covenant Separatist fired a salvo of plasma torpedoes that chased away a group of Turian Cruisers that were moving in for broadsides. "Get your ship over to the Spirit of Fire for a hard dock and transfer that slipspace drive over. Cutter and his crew had done enough from what Serina's reports can tell me. The fleet will keep the Turian and Salarian busy."

"Yes Sir" said Anderson before he added "What about theseâ€|..." as he glance over at his Datapad. "Asaris? They were with the Turian and Salarian before thing hit the fans."

Cole shook his head before replying "Not for me to decide. If they are non-hostile then I'll like to maintain it that way. Let The civis in the diplomatic corps deal with them. Now if you excuse me I got a battle to win" with that Cole cut off the com channel from his ship.

"Orders sir?" Asked Harrier innocently even as he charged up the MAC guns.

"Dock with the Spirit of Fire. And target this ship" Said Anderson as he selected a Salarian Cruiser that was attempting to intercept one of the fleeing civilian tugs that supposed to be assigned to hauling the massive alien artefact from which the Citadel races came from. There was a brief white flash as the a 800 ton ferric tungsten projectile accelerated out of the muzzle of the MAC gun before smashing into the cruiser seconds later, overloading the kinetic barriers and punching a hole straight through the ship.

"Thanks for the cover fire Defiant. Sunflower out." Radioed the captain of the civilian ship before the tug moves into the sphere formation. Anderson nodded before turning to manually implement the nav course for docking procedures.

"Docking with Spirit of Fire. Hark dock hatches are connecting. Clamps locked in on homing beacons." Reported Harrier as the Marathon Mark II cruiser slowly approached the bottom of the Spirit of Fire. A dull thump was later followed by a series of loud clanks that reverberated through the hull as the magnetic clamps locked into place. "Contact. Pressurising the Hard Docks, Please feel free to move about the cabin and Thank you for flying with UNSC defiant" Joked the AI before glares from Anderson shut the AI up.

"Chief Engineer Daniel, get your teams together and move that drive over to that Spirit of Fire. We got a battle to fight." Ordered Anderson before he stared out the viewport where a fierce though one sided battle is taking place.

Turian Escaped pod 90-D163

Near Receiving Relay 314

Drifting from the wreckage of Turian Dreadnought Warbringer.

General Septimus Orake growled as he watched the on-going battle between the fleets. Tapping the pod's com systems once again, "This is General Septimus Orake I need assistance in retrieval. Someone get their Thrasher chased hide over here!" Roared the general as he watched his second in command's incompetent battle formation. Seconds turned to minutes as no one replied to his hail.

"When I get my hands on the captain of that shipâ€¦" Growled Septimus before there was a loud clank as something connected with his escape pod. There was a moment of fear as he glaced around for a breach before relaxed at the hiss of pressuring procedures in the airlock. He got up and grabbed a nearby Assault rifle before pointed it at the airlock.

The Hatch slid open revealing a Turian in recon armour "General" came the voice of Saren Arterius. As Septimus lowered his rifle, Saren darted forward slamming a fist at the General before drawing his pistol and kicking the fallen assault rifle away. "Under the orders of Councillor Valern you are placed under arrest."

Coughing as he regains his breath Septimus narrowed his eyes "On what Charges? I was only following orders from the Hierarch. You no longer have any Specter Status. There is no more Citadel council!"

"We'll see about that" said Saren before pulling the trigger. The mass accelerator slug left the barrel of the pistol seconds before splattering the inside of the escape pod with the General's blood.

"Take him to the holding cell." Ordered Saren as Septimus howled in pain from the wound on his hand that was reaching for a concealed pistol. Two Turian soldiers marched forward and pulled the general off his feet dragging him to the modified crews quarter.

Growling with displeasure, Saren left the escape pod before tapping his com unit. "Destroy that pod." One of Palvern's Night mass accelerator gun blasted the pod before the ruined stealth frigate accelerated towards the mass relay, jumping through before plotting a direct course back to the Turian Homeworld, Palvern.

Authors note: Well here you go for Chapter 16. Hope you all like it. I got a few trail exams so will be unable to give you anything else for now except maybe Chapter 17's Sneak preview.

17. Chapter 17

Chapter 17

Forerunner Leviathan class Keyship.

Sector 375, known to Reclaimers as the Sarum system, 102745 years, 3 months, 25 days, 12 hours, 57 minutes and 10 seconds after deactivation by rampant ancilla.

Taking cover behind Reclaimer designed vessels.

Lieutenant Sanders growled as he watched the on-going fleet battle between the allied UNSC and Separatist fleet with the fractured Citadel fleet. While there is no immediate danger of them overrunning the UNSC vessels that form the outer shell of the sphere, they are in a bad position since they can't move without exposing the damaged covenant fleet and Spirit of Fire. "Unit 30-29 get me the goddamn main guns online now! I don't care if you have to reroute most of the power just fucking do it."

The sentinel was silent as it began to prompt the constructors that are busily repairing the main power conduits even as more of their brethren emerged from vents connecting the rest of the ship to join in the frenzy repair work. "The constructors report success in partially repair the main gun power conduit. You may have 10% power."

"Good target those ships and fire at will!" snapped Sanders even as he paced around angry that he was unable to have anything to do until now. The hull of the Forerunner vessel begin to glow with the dim blue lights as power coursed through the extensive power conduits that lined the hull of the Forerunner vessel. The energy gathered coursed into the main gun located in the prow of the forerunner Keyship, where bright motes of blue purple light gathered.

There was a second before a bright purple beam of energy erupted from the gun, splitting into multiple individual beams of energy that scythed through 30 of the turian vessels that are currently trading fire with the UNSC vessels.

"Holy crap!" was all Sanders could say as he watched the weapon decimated the enemy ships. "You call that 10%?" asked Sanders as the main gun finally powered down.

"The Pulse Plasma Array was the standard armament of all Forerunner Capital warships." Replied the Sentinel as it access the Forerunner databanks of the Keyship "This current Vessel is armed with what is considered a medium class Pulse Plasma Array, caution is advised when compared to a Fortress Class Warship."

Shaking his head, Sanders walked over to one of the translated console. "This is ship got a name?" he asked as he scan through the brief data presented by the console. Nothing but ship diagnostic.

"This ship is called the Aurora. A Leviathan class Keyship" replied Anders as she went through the Forerunner database on a nearby console. "It seems to have some interesting data that would provide evidence to the blank period 100 thousand years ago." She added as she scans through the ship's logs.

"Blank period?" asked the lieutenant as he looked up from the console he was reading.

"Fossil evidence suggested a mass extinction occurred on Earth around 100 thousand years ago. We managed to find fossils in the period before and after that time period but there was one period in between that was completely devoid of any fossil. Nothing to suggest any form of life." Replied Anders even as she scanned through the data. "From what the database can tell me, it seems the Forerunner were responsible for the mass extinction event. But if this is true then it wasn't just one planet is it?" asked Anders directly at the sentinel.

Sentinel Unit 30-29 was silent as it looked through the database. "Confirmed. When the main engine of this vessel was crippled by the crew to prevent the rampart ancilla from joining the rank of the Flood, they died along with the other sentient beings of this galaxy when the weapon of last resort was utilised to prevent the spread of the Flood."

"Wait, if that's true then how come we and the covenant survived?" Asked Sanders as he shifted the weight of his MA5B assault rifle. "I mean it did wipe out all life right?"

"Partially correct, Reclaimer." Replied the sentinel as it turned towards Sanders. "Samples of surviving species from the Flood war were index and transferred to the Installation 00 for preservation. After the firing of the weapons, all would be returned to their homeworld, safe from the parasite." Finished the Sentinel as it once more looked back at the main console.

"Wait then what about the species on this ship? And what happened to the Forerunners?" Asked Anders as she started to comprehend the plans of the forerunner to stop the threat of the Flood. By removing the parasitic lifeform of their food supply, the Forerunners effectively tried to starve the Flood to death.

"The species aboard this vessel was one of the more advanced species, managing to use their technology to withstand assaults from the Flood for 2 days. Their desperate communication signals were finally intercepted by a passing keyship and an Armada was assigned to destroy the Flood on their planet and index the race for preservation." Replied the sentinel as it shifted through the old records. "They were separated to two other Keyship before the last of their race boarded this vessel. As for my makers, they perished in a desperate last stand to hold the flood until the weapon array activated, or at least that was the plan."

"I seeâ€|. What is the species called?" asked Anders as she finally understand the horrors of the Flood, a lifeform that managed to pushed even the highly advanced Forerunners to the brink of extinction and how close the Spirit of Fire escaped the same fate.

The sentinel was hesitating as if not sure what to replied. Finally it decided to follow the most widely used name of that time. "They were mostly known as the Prothean."

CAS Class Assault Carrier Shadow of Intent

Sarum system, 10 years unit into the Age of rebuild

Currently chasing after the retreating Turian and Salarian fleet.

Fleetmaster Rtas watched as the retreating Turian and Salarian fleet fired their mass accelerator in a desperate attempt to hold back the Covenant separatist that have emerged from the protection of the Human's Sphere formation. "Even the humans provide some challenge compared to this" muttered the weapons officer as he fired another salvo of plasma torpedoes. Rtas Vadum merely grunted his agreement before selecting a ship.

"All ships launch boarding craft at this vessel, capture it and its crews for interrogation." Growled Rtas as he selected one of the Turian Dreadnoughts that is still actively firing its main guns at the chasing Covenant Separatist.

"By my honour Fleetmaster" said Fieldmaster Sagu Vadum as he marshalled his forces into the heavily modified phantom dropships. As he steps into the leading phantom he shouted to his troops. "By the Blood of our fathers!"

"We shall seek honour!" shouted back his troops in response to the time old tradition.

"Be vigilant my brothers, these cowards" gestured Sagu Vadum at an image of a Turian and Salarian that appeared behind him "Have seek to defile a relic of the Forerunners, all for the gain of their governments." The statement earning sneers from the Sangheili present as they glared at the images.

"They fired on their ally, dishonouring their alliance" continued Sagu as he marched down the walkway. "They know not the meaning of honour!" With this Sagu activated his Energy sword "We shall board one of their ship, and teach these cowards the meaning of honour!" Roared Sagu as he raised his energy sword in triumph. The other Sangheili present roared their approval as they activated their own energy swords and raise it in salute of their commander. The heat from all the activated swords causing the air above them to shimmer with the heat given off by the plasma blades.

Nodding his approval, Sagu lowered and deactivated his sword followed by his troops. Tapping his com unit, "Fleetmaster we are ready."

"May the Forerunners bless your swords." Replied Rtas as he tapping a button on his command chair authorising the launch of the phantom dropships.

Citadel Space Station

Serpent Nebula,

Floating in the deepest part of the nebula.

Councillor Tevos frowns as she attempted to connect to the Asari Republic network, for a few hours now all the attempts to reconnect the Asari republic extranet from Citadel had been unsuccessful.

Suddenly her omni tool beeped as it received a new message. Reading the message, Councillor Tevos sighed and got up from her console, heading towards the council chamber.

The doors slid apart revealing a duo of highly trained Asari commandos that were assigned with the duties of being the councillor's bodyguards. As the councillor Tevos exited the Asari embassy and got into her private air car, she glanced at her sides to confirm that the other two Asaris were cramped into the car on her two sides. The air car sped off, before depositing the councillor and her bodyguards just outside of the council chamber. She marched into the chamber while her body guards took position on both sides of the entrance, watching the spacious room for any assassination attempts.

"This has better be worth it, Valern." Said Tevos as she walking into the private chambers where the councillors held private meetings. But she stopped suddenly as she noticed the Salarian councillor was also present. "Milos? What is the meaning of this?"

Milos held his head down in sadness as he tries to figure out a way to break the news to his friend and fellow councillor. But before he could speak, Valern spoke first "The Turian Hierarchâ€|. Along with the Salarian Unionâ€|.. have decided to revoke the membership of the Asari from the council."

"By the goddess what madness is this?" Tevos nearly shouted in her surprise. "The Asari founded the council in the first place. What gives you the right to kick us out?"

"Please Tevos, do not make this any harder than it is." Said Milos as he finally found his voice "Despite our discontent, our governments have decided this and will be planning to begin a war with your republic."

Tevos was in a shocked silence as Valern got up and went to the window, he looked out watching at the C-sec fleet currently flying around. "You have 2 days to move your people out of this station, the assault on the Asari ships here will begin on the third day, I suggest you move quickly." Stated Valern before he left the chamber.

"If it's any comfort, I managed to convince the Salarian Union not to start the war without a formal declaration of war. Your people have until then before the teams of STG starts their operation." Whispered Milos before he left as well. Councillor Tevos was still silent, unable to imagine what actions to take. Suddenly, there was a sound of a pistol shot which shocked Tevos into action. She got up looked into the door which the Salarian councillor had entered, finding him slumped on the ground with a pistol in his hand.

She gave a cry before rushing to the exit where her bodyguards had barged in, weapons drawn. "Inform the Asari commanders in C-Sec, tell them to move discreetly and begin the evacuation of all the Asaris on

this station back to our colonies."

"Councillor?" Asked the younger of the two Commandos.

"Just DO IT!" yelled Tevos finally losing her cool. Minutes later all the Asari commander in C-sec suddenly received a short message before carrying out the councillor's order. Councillor Tevos watch sadly as she and the first batch of Asari refugees began to board a docked Asari cruiser. She briefly consider the bittersweet sensation of irony as the Asaris was forced into exile from Citadel space, much the same as the Quarans were when they unleashed the geth on this galaxy. The cruiser once filled with refugees, powered up its engine moving it towards the nearest Mass relay heading towards Asari space.

Turian Dreadnought Majestic Hierarch

Receiving point of Relay 314

Engaging Grey hulled and Purple Hulled ships.

Commander Felix watch as his mighty dreadnought fired its mass accelerator rounds towards the grey ships. The grey ship shimmers with a bright golden field as the mass accelerator rounds impacted the strange kinetic barriers that these species has. "Concentrate fire on this one. I want that ship Blown to pieces!" Growled Felix as he selected the smallest ship of the enemy sphere formation. He has to give them credit, putting their vessels in a sphere formation to intercept the mass accelerator rounds that were originally meant for disabling the artefact ship.

As he was studying the tactical data, suddenly thirty Hierarchy vessels detonated into Zero fuelled fireballs. "Spirits" muttered a crewman as he stared in shock at the instantaneous destruction of 30 ships.

Suddenly "Commander!" shouted the sensor officer as his sensor console started to beep with contacts "Sensors have detected incoming fighters! Gunships or bombers are just behind them!"

"Activate the Guardian array, target those fighters and fire at will!" replied Felix as he returned his attention to the tactical data. He replayed the data slowly revealing the thirty ships that were cut down by what appears to be multiple energy beams. Suddenly the Majestic Hierarch shook. "Status! What the hell just happened?" Growled Felix as he looked up from the data.

"Sir the Gunship class vessels are boarding crafts! Deck 10 through 6 have reported something is burning through the hull!" reported the operation officer as he filtered through the reports coming in from throughout the ships.

"Tell the crew to get armed!" Shouted Felix as he went over to a nearby armoury and grabbed an assault rifle.

Meanwhile down below, Turian crewmen armed with assault rifles stood at the ready behind makeshift barriers of crates, weapons pointed towards the hole slowly being cut by a 2 prong equipment. "Get ready!" shouted the leader of the makeshift defence force. Suddenly the 2 prongs disappeared.

"What the?" muttered a crewman when nothing happened.

"You and you, go up and check the hull integrity," growled the leader as he pointed to two of the crewmen beside him. The two crewmen shared a glance before slowly easing out of cover and creeping towards the hole. They check the hull before turning back to shout an all clear. But as they turn, the hull behind them detonated in a blue white shimmer, blowing a large hole through the hull that was followed by multiple plasma bolts.

A crewman screamed as a plasma bolt caught him on his arm, while another whimpered from the pain in his face where a blue white plasma bolt hit before dying. "Spirits, Return fire! Ordered the leader as he and the surviving members fired their mass accelerator rounds into the hole. After a few seconds of sustained fire, they stopped.

"You think we got them sir?" asked a crewman as he peered out of cover. There was a sudden crackle before a roar filled the hole.

Following the roar, a being encased in bright golden armour stepped through the hole, a two prong blade of energy crackling beside him. Its mandibles split in what appears to be a wide grin. "The time has come Cowards!" roared in a widely used Turian language the being as it charged forward. Two of the crewmen fired in desperation, but their rounds simply bounds off the creature's energy shields. The rest of the smarter ones run, abandoning the failing defence.

Minutes later, Commander Felix stare as the doors into the CIC was cut apart by the same two prong energy blade that the surviving crewmen had told of. The doors detonated in a bright blue shimmer as the being step through. "What are you?" asked Felix as a slight bit of fear enters his voice.

"Me?" Laughed the being as more of his kind step through the now broken door. "I'm Sangheili, and I'm your doom!" before the rest of the Sangheilis charged forwards, firing their plasma rifles while Fieldmaster Sagu decapitated a nearby Turian. The scuffle was over in seconds before most of the Turians lay dead on the deck of their Dreadnought. "You are still alive?" asked Sagu with amusement as he kneels down beside the Turian Commander.

Commander Felix raised his head slightly, as he attempted to move away from the kneeling Sagu. "No please" he begged.

Fieldmaster Sagu grunted in disgust before activating his energy blade. Felix looks in fear before his mind collapse into unconscious. "Take him and the other survivors, brothers, our work here is done." Growled Fieldmaster Sagu as he glanced around scanning the surrounding before the beeping of his com got his attention. "Fleetmaster" Said Sagu with respect "We have successfully captured this ship. Requesting extraction of the enemy officer."

"Good. Extraction is on their way. The enemy are retreating as they should before our might" laughed Fleetmaster Rtas as he watched the remains of the Turian and Salarian fleet reteat through the Mass relay. Minutes later, Human civilian tugs clamped onto the captured Turian dreadnought towing it with them into Slipspace on course to

the nearest Sangheili and Human joint colony.

Author's note: There finished for chapter 17, hope you all like it. Btw I need a new Beta reader since Ramen Knight said he is unable to help me beta read anymore. He got too many things on his plate. So those who are interested pls pm me.

18. Chapter 18

Chapter 18

Unknown vessel.

Dark Space between the Milky way Galaxy and Pegasus Galaxy

Inactive after 50,000 Years.

â€|**. Receiving Burst Transmissionâ€|. Data confirmedâ€|..**

â€|**. Forerunner statusâ€|. Extinctâ€|. Secondary Objective Achievedâ€|..**

Resuming Primary Objectiveâ€| Beginning Testing of Reclaimersâ€|..

Unit Nazara begin Operation Citadelâ€|. Orders sentâ€|..

The Dark space between the galaxies was black as usual until a red light suddenly appeared out of nowhere. Following a predetermined course the vessel transitioned into FTLâ€|.

UNSC Astraeus class Battleship Field of Hope

Sarum star system, 2563, September, 19th

Leading 5th Fleet.

Vice Admiral Ivan Cole sat down even as he observes the Civilian tugs currently moving around the space collectively clamping onto the strange device that is that the Asari's have called a Mass Relay.

"Looking good, clamps are secured. We're bringing it back as soon as we finish synching our slipspace drive Admiral" reported the leading Civilian tug even as they begin to tow the now active relay towards the predetermined location.

"Good. 5th fleet will jump as soon as your vessels read ready." Replied Cole before he cut off the com channel "Tell Frigate squadron 5 they will be patrolling this space for anymore stranglers. Have them be prepared to switch with 4th fleet reinforcements." Cole said as he got up.

"Roger that Vice Admiral" replied Tanya before her avatar collapsed in a swirl of photons. Suddenly her disembodied voice filled Cole's personal Com unit. "What about the Asari's? From what they were willing to give, their flagship has suffered extensive damage and we seem to have taken their only means of returning."

Cole gave a sigh before answering "Fleetmaster Rtas Vadum wants to take them to the nearest joint colony so that negotiation can begin. Since we're heading the same location we're giving them a lift." Before he returns his gaze to the viewport "assign Battle group 8 to begin hard dock procedures so we can move them. And set course to Shanxi."

Asari Flagship Destiny Ascension.

Currently known to Separatists as The Sarum system.

Engaging in repairs to outer hull.

Matriarch Lidanya frown as she scan the reported sent to her by the engineering crews. "This can't be rightâ€|" she muttered before she switched the com to the engineering channel. "Engineering, are you certain of this report?"

"Unfortunately we are Matriarch" responded the distressed chief Engineer "Our hull is reacting badly to the sudden heating even when we managed to stop the plasma's progress through the hulls. We estimate the hull will fail disastrously if we attempt a FTL jump, even worst with a Relay jump. And no amount of reinforcing with the plates from other ships will fix it."

"How disastrous?" asked the matriarch, as she continues to read through other parts of the report.

"Imagine an insect that got squashed on an air car's windshield." Replied the engineer curtly.

Matriarch Lidanya winced slightly at that comparison before sighing. "Roger that CIC out." She gaze sadly at the CIC of the Destiny Ascension the ship having been the pride of the Asari. Will it really have to be left behind?

"Matriarch incoming communication from the Humans," the communication officer reported, as she put the transmission on speaker.

"This is the UNSC Cruiser Savannah, to Asari flagship Destiny Ascension. Do you copy over?" asked the captain of the UNSC vessel.

Matriarch Lidanya was surprised at the humans as the Covenant Separatists called them. They look so much like the Asari that some of the crews are speculating whether the universe have given them a distant cousin. "UNSC Savannah, this is Matriarch Lidanya, we can hear you." Lidanya replied as she personally connected her mic to the com system before asking "Is something the problem?"

"Negative, but we heard your flagship is facing someâ€| difficulties. And we are willing to offer you some assistance." Came back the voice.

Matriarch Lidanya swore that if she didn't know better she would have believed she was talking to another Asari. "We are grateful but my engineering teams have said that this ship is no longer saveable. We are planning to move to another vessel instead."

"I must insist." Came back the other voice. "Fleetmaster Rtas Vadum made it very clear that we should do anything possible to save your flagship, since it has something to do with the honour your crews earned and if there's one thing we have learned with our relationship with the Sangheili it is to never belittle their honour unless you fancy an energy sword fight to the death." The UNSC captain replied.

Lidanya sighed sadly as she replied. "We can't our calculations show that this ship will not survive our FTL jump, much less a relay."

"Who said anything about a relay?" asked the UNSC captain. "We have been ordered to perform hard dock procedures and get you to Shanxi with slipspace."

Matriarch Lidanya could have sworn the captain of the UNSC vessel must be grinning at this. "We are grateful for your help. But may I enquire what is this hard dock procedure?" but there was no reply.

Suddenly the alarms blared before the sensor officer shouted out. "Matriarch! Two UNSC cruisers are on intercept course. Possible collision imminent!" even as she continue to calculate the course to determine their action. Suddenly the alarms died out. "Not a collision course but pretty close" reported the officer as she finished her calculations. "They are coming alongside us Matriarch."

Matriarch Lidanya frowned at this sudden action. She considered her fleet's position before deciding to take a leap of faith. "Lower the kinetic barriers." Her crew stopped what they were doing before staring at their matriarch. "Do it. If they meant us harm they would have blown us to pieces already. And bring the side cameras online."

"Lowering kinetic barriers" replied the ops officer as she pulled her hand across the holographic console. "Bringing the cameras online."

The galaxy map was replaced with two holographic windows each showing the huge grey bulk of the UNSC cruisers. White puffs of thrusters were evident as the two cruisers move closer using their docking thrusters for finer control. "Contact in 20 seconds Matriarch" reported the sensor officers as the other crewmen watched the closing cruiser pairs.

At the last possible seconds the docking thrusters flare into life. Slowing the two Marathon Mark2 cruisers to a halt, there Magnetic clamps on the sides opened wide. The cameras were suddenly blacked out by the bulk of the cruisers. "Contact" Reported the sensor officer as a series of thumps echoed throughout the Asari's flagship.

"Docking clamps secured. Everything looks good. Alright Destiny ascension hope you're ready for your first slipspace trip." the voice of the UNSC captain stated.

"Thank you." Matriarch Lidanya replied. Before the UNSC captain cut off the transmission, she asked "May I know who you are?"

"Of course, the name's Bella Forge." Came the reply before the channel finally cut.

Secluded Forerunner Shield world.

Edge of Dark space.

Scanning dark space.

A Blue hued sphere floated through the many ducts that lined walls of the installation he was put in charge of. "Hummm hu ummmmm huh ummmmm hummmmmmm" hum the monitor as it slowly floated into the control room.

"What have I told you about humming?" A figure asked sitting in the command chair of the control room.

"That you dislike it?" replied the monitor as he looked around the control room.

"Exactly" Replied the figure as it turned back to watching the sensor data. "Have the sensor array in sector 54 picked up anything?"

"Nothing unusual, a few stray asteroids and cometsâ€| oh my." the monitor replied.

Raising an eyebrow, the figure got up and walks over to a holographic console. "They're back. Monitor, activate the emergency protocols. Codename "Reaper", authentication code Theta Gamma Charlie."

"Code confirmed. Beginning protocols activation." Replied the monitor as it worked. Suddenly it paused "Maker what off the Reclaimers currently orbiting this planet?"

"Wake them. The sentinels should have done their work." the Librarian replied as she once more move back towards the command chair of the room.

"I shall do so at once." Replied 343 Guilty Spark as he floated into the building's extensive ductwork toward where the Reclaimers ship lay inactiveâ€| hidden among the ever-growing fleet of Forerunner warships.

Author's note: yes this chapter is really short by my usual standard. But I can't help it. Got exams coming in 1 week time so I have to finish this chapter in a hurry. Hope you all like it. See you when I get back from exams.

19. Chapter 19

Chapter 19

UNSC Prowler Port Stanley

Urs system, 2563 September 27th

Currently orbiting the Sangheilian moon Suban

Captain Serin Osman sighed as she looked out the viewscreen of her prowler. It had been a full 10 years since she was assigned to lead the ONI team Kilo-Five to incite Insurrection within the Sangheili society. But her recent attempts were with dismal results so to speak. While at first after 5 years of labour she and her team managed to help the Servants of Abiding Truth gain a foothold against Thel Vadam and his council, but everything came crashing down after an unintended joint strike between the UNSC Marine corps and the Sangheili armed forces captured Avu Med 'Telcam, commonly known to ONI as "The Bishop", following an assault on an insurrection outpost. After that the Sangheili insurrection leadership shunted any aid from ONI believing them to have provided the information and location of that outpost. To make things worse, it seems that Lord Hood has begun reducing Admiral Parangosky's funding and there was nothing she could do about it.

"You know staring out the viewscreen is not gonna cause any uproar among the Sangheiliâ|. Right?" asked Black box as his customary avatar appeared on the bridges holo-pedestal, sarcasm laced in his voice. The Smart AI's box of blue light avatar shifted slightly as it turns to face the Captain. The captain remained silent, ignoring the AI's sarcasm. Black box huff slightly, irritated that he was being ignored by what he considered to be inferior compared to him.

"Anyway, Sergeant Mal wishes to speak with you." With that the holo pedestal shut off before the doors to the bridge slid open.

"Staff Sergeant what do you wish to talk about?" Asked Osman, as she got straight to the point. Despite her former Spartan training, her irritation at being unable to complete her assigned mission was more than obvious to the Staff Sergeant.

"Ma'am, with all due respect," said Malcolm as he snapped into attention, his British accent fairly obvious in his voice. "Me and my boys have been on this team for 10 years, and the briefing provided by ONI Section 3 said it was supposed to be a 5 years op. Me and my boys are getting tired of continuing this half assed missionâ|. Ma'am." Unhappiness was written all across the marine's face, and Osman didn't have to be a former Spartan to see that.

Osman was silent as she contemplated the staff sergeant's words, true the mission was supposed to be a five year op at most, and she most certainly have overstep her authority to recklessly continue this mission. While she was sure that Admiral Parangosky would forgive her on this little transgression, she was not hopeful of getting away scar free from this failure. "Staff sergeant, we will continue on with this mission. ONI section 3 said it was important that the Sangheili remain disorganize as long as possible and I intend to do so to the best of my ability." Replied Osman in a cold calculated voice. "Any objections?" by now the coldness in her voice would have frozen liquid nitrogen.

The Staff sergeant was hesitant as he tries to make a decision before finally deciding the best course of action. "Yes ma'am, By UNSC law 64 section 3, I'm hereby relieving you of command." Said the staff sergeant as his hands dropped from his attention pose to firmly grasping on his M6D Sidearm. As he kept his eyes narrowed at his former commanding officer, his fellow ODST team-mates filled in from the door, Assault rifles ready with their safeties off. Osman watched as the ODSTs took position around her while Staff sergeant Malcolm

walked forward with a pair of cuffs in hand.

"Bad mistake" she muttered before dashing forward to the nearest ODST with a spinning kick, her leg catching the marine's assault rifle before she got off a shot. The rifle flew into the air before being caught by Osman, she fired a burst at Corporal Beloi as he tried to shift his aim. The bullets mostly flattened themselves against his armour but one shot got through and sliced through his arm muscle, making him dropped his own assault rifle with a few Russian curses. Sergeant Lian Devereaux having recovered from Osman kick jumped forward and grabbed hold of the assault rifle, the two of them begin wrestling for control over the gun.

"Anytime now would be great" grunted the Canadian as she struggle to point the weapon from her direction, sweat beaded her face even with the cooling system in her suit. She gave a sudden yelp as Osman suddenly pulled the rifle causing her to lose balance before being floored by a kick to the groin. She groaned as Staff sergeant Malcolm tries to aim with his pistol. A single shot rang out from Osman's captured rifle, the bullet neatly lodging in the barrel of Malcolm's pistol rendering the gun useless.

Osman started to smirk as she look at the three disarmed ODSTs around her. "You were saying?" she asked as she shouldered her assault rifle, the muzzle of the gun aimed at Malcolm.

Malcolm raised his hand in surrender before a grin split across his face. "You win" he said as Osman flicked on the safety on the rifle. He got up and took out a blue metal baton which he ran over Belois "injured" arm, small sparks were notice as the electric in the baton relaxed the special nanofiber suit that each people had worn for the training.

"Bloody TTR. My arm will still be feeling numb for another hour" Growled Belois as he flexed his arm to get more feeling into it. Despite the scowl on his face, his fellow marines can tell he was taking this with good humour. "Well I guess the captain wins againâ€¦ for the twentieth time." Added Belois as he pointedly glanced at the sarge.

"At least you get away with a just a numb arm" retorted Staff Sergeant Malcolm as he helped Sergeant Lian Devereaux up. "Lian will probably feel that kick for a day" which earned him a friendly punch from Lian. "I can stand up myself, you know? Taken worse punch from an Elite before" she said before shaking of Mal's help.

"All right fun's over" said Osman as she removed the clip from the rifle. "Black box, deactivate the holograms." She ordered as she head towards the door to check the result of the training. "Yes ma'am" replied the AI lazily before the virtual field surrounding the team disappeared, replace with the virtual training deck. "Mal come with me." The staff sergeant nodded to his fellow marines before trotting after the captain. The stepped through one of the two doors in the virtual deck and entered the observation room.

"Officer on deck!" said Naomi as she quickly snapped herself to attention.

"At ease Naomi." Said Serin as she returned the Spartan's salute. Naomi visible relaxed as she brought up the score list of all

training to list in the new results. Mal visibly wince as he took a peek at the record. Serin gave a barely noticeable sly grin to Mal before get straight to business. "Black box, sound proof the room and bring up the transmission please" There was a sound of someone snapping a finger before the consoles indicate the room was secured from any eavesdropping. Seconds later a holographic viewscreen was projected on the observation window.

"Captain Osman, you and your ship are hereby ordered to return to Reach for Debriefing. The mission has officially been cancelled." The obvious distaste was that much obvious in Parangosky's voice "The Port Stanley will dock with Anchor seven and begin a refit operation while your crews will be given shore leave." Just as it seems that the transmission has ended, "and Staff sergeant Malcolm, I will expect you to remember that this information is classified." With that the recorded transmission ended.

"The Ice queen, straight to the point as always." Muttered Malcolm as he shook his head at Parangosky's cold attitude before returning his attention to Serin Osman. "Well I guess this will be our last training together ma'am" as he held out his hand. Serin took his hand and shook it, "Spartan, sorry for what you been through but you have my thanks for saving humanities' sorry behind" said Malcolm as he gather his courage to shake hands with the Spartan. Naomi lightly shook his hand once before letting go. The Marine gave one last salute to the captain before leaving the room.

"You knowâ€|" started Naomi after Malcolm left the room "this might be the last op we will have together. No telling where they will send me next." As she unclasp her helmet's locks. The green helmet was removed, revealing her regulation cut blonde hair and a pair of stunning grey eyes. Serin turned and looked directly at her former fellow trainee and friend.

"That maybe so, but we always know Spartan never die" replied Serin with a said smile before she raised her hands and made the Spartan smile. Naomi gave a nod which spoke volumes before replacing her helmet and leaving the room. Serin watched as her friend leave the room before refocusing on the task at hand "Black box, set course for Reach." With that she left the room as well. The Space surrounding Suban was filled with the telltale sign of a slip-space rupture as the Prowler slipped on a randomised course.

UNSC refitted ODP New Alexandria,

Epsilon Eridani system, 2563 November 14th

Orbiting above the ruins of New Alexandria.

Commander Lee Riker gave a somewhat relaxed sigh as he gulped down his last cup of coffee for his current shift. Setting down his cup, he tapped on the shoulder of the sensor officer for a status update. "Anything new?" The sensor officer merely shook her head before returning to reading the incoming data. "I wish something would show up" muttered Riker as he walked around the command centre of the ODP. Suddenly alarms blared throughout the station as one of the Early Detection Stations or EDS sounded the alarm of an incoming vessel via slip-space. Quickly tapping his com piece the commander snapped out orders "All hands get to battle position. And someone shut that damn thing off!" The ops officer merely typed on his console before the

alarm shut off. "Alright what's the approach vector?" asked Riker as he looked over the sensor officer's shoulder at the sensor data logs.

"Incoming craft at sector 4, no IFF detected yet. The mass estimation puts the vessel at corvette size." Reported the sensor officer as she brings up the data transmitted by the EDS and running it through a profile database. On the main screen, dozens of known ship profiles were analysed in a microsecond as the computer runs the software. A second later, a large question mark was placed over the EDS profile data. "No match in the database sir." Reported the officer unnecessarily.

"I can see that." Said Riker as he considered his next move "Nav, I want us pointed at the estimate exit point of that ship. Weap load up and prime the S-MAC but hold fire until I say so." Ordered the commander as he glanced at the ETA of the unknown. Multiple thrusters flared as the ODP orientated itself at the guessed exit vector of the unknown craft.

"Sir! The station Quezon has also positioned itself for a clear shot at the unknown." Reported the com officer as he read the messaged incoming from their fellow ODP. Commander Riker merely nodded before he moved towards the holo table. As the countdown reaches the zero mark, a slip-space ruptured opened before it deposited a small craft into normal space.

"Anything?" asked Riker as he paced behind the sensor officer.

"Nothâ€| wait receiving IFF signalâ€|. It's the Port Stanley." Reported the sensor officer as she finally confirmed the identity of the incoming ship.

"All hand's Stand down" ordered Riker as he disappointedly dismissed the general quarters order. "Com get me a com channel to that ship." The com officer nodded before he attempted to hail the prowler.

"UNSC Port Stanley, this is New Alexandria actual come inâ€| I repeat UNSC Port Stanley, this is New Alexandria actual come in."

"New Alexandria actual this is Port Stanley, read you five by five. Requesting docking clearance with Anchor 12 for refit and rearment." Came the monotonous voice of Black box.

"Solid copy over, hold position" requested the com officer as he switched the com frequency to match that of Anchor 12. "Anchor 12 this is New Alexandria Actual, UNSC Port Stanley is requesting permission to dock for refit and rearment. Awaiting at your digression." With that the com officer cut off the com channel to both the mobile shipyard and the prowler. "Just another day at work huh sir?" he said as he lent back into his chair while turning to face Commander Riker.

"Somewhat" replied Riker half-heartedly as he got his cup back in his hand. "Lieutenant Jim, you have the bridge." Before he walked out of the ODP's command centre.

UNSC Mark2 ODP Jersey

Epsilon alpha system, 2563 November 15th

Orbiting joint colony Shanxi.

"This has better be good" grumbled commander James Howard as he stomped into the command centre of his ODP. He was annoyed for being interrupted while being off his shift.

"Oh it's good alright. Or should I say bad?" asked the Nav officer who was commonly known among the crew as Joker. The commander knew the young officer well enough, Jeff was one of the best pilots he had ever instructed and till today the commander still cannot figure out why the talented pilot was stuck manoeuvring an ODP instead of piloting a ship.

"Not now Jeff" growled the commander as he personally took a seat at the command console. "Sensors, bring up what the EDS have found." The Sensor officer merely nodded before an image filled the main screen a large blob was highlighted and mass estimation along with the estimated size was available. "Good lord that thing seems to weight more than a CAS class assault carrier. Does the Fleet-master see this?" asked James as he manually try to match the distorted image to any known ship profile and wasn't surprise when he got no match.

"Oh he sees them alright." Replied Joker as he brought up a video showing the Separatist CCS Battlecruisers moving to surround the estimated entrance point of the incoming mass. "And if Simon there isn't slacking off, I would say they've charged up their main plasma battery." Added Joker as he zoom in on the battlecruisers, showing the glowing blue plasma gathering at the tips of their cannons, ready to fire in a second's notice. Simon blushed with embarrassment as he tries to focus back on his sensor reading. "Lieutenant Jeff's correct sir. Fleet-master N'tho 'Sraom's fleet have charged up their weapons."

"Get me a direct line to him, And Joker, I'll have a word with you when this is over." Growled an irritated James as he set his face into the calm poker face most commander have learned when commanding in combat. The main screen with replaced with a live video feed of the bridge of Undying Faith. "Fleet-master" greeted James with respect.

"Commander James" greeted the Sangheili as he focused on the commander "I assume it's about the approaching contact?"

"Indeed Fleet-master" replied James "Size estimation puts it at around 15 kilometres, longer than an Assault carrier."

"Intriguing. But even as we speak the object approaches. Do your people have any idea what this object is?" asked N'tho 'Sraom.

"None what so ever Fleet-master. It could be a ship or a stray asteroid for all we know." Replied James. "As such, all the ODP have primed their weapons and are ready to fire on demand."

"I see." Said N'tho 'Sraom as he scratched his lower mandibles. "Prepare you weapon well Human, for I fear something unknown is about to happen." With that he cut off the com channel.

"Cherry fellow isn't he?" remarked Joker as he busied himself with aiming the ODP at the estimated entry point of the object. "I can see why he got command of a CCS battle-group instead of a Assault carrier group." Added Jeff with a snicker.

"THAT'S IT." Roared a furious James "Lieutenant Jeff Moreau, if you cannot behave professionally as expected of every UNSC combat personnel, I'll have you removed from this bridge. Do I make myself clear?" said the commander with cold voice.

"Crystal sir." Replied Joker somewhat embarrassed at being scolded for not behaving professionally.

"Busted" Muttered Simon as he read the latest incoming sensor data. "Sir! Slip-space rupture detected! The entry point is exactly where we predicted it." He reported as a blue white portal of slip-space opened and spit out a bizarrely linked ships. "Receiving IFF. It's the UNSC civilian tugs assigned to Vice Admiral Cole's fleet. God that thing is huge." As the civilian tugs towed the Mass relay out of the Slip-space portal, more ruptures filled the space as the rest of Vice Admiral Cole's fleet drop out of slip-space along with a huge vessel clearly of Forerunner origin plus the remaining ships of the Asari fleets that were hard docked to various UNSC vessels.

"Get me a channel to the Flagship." Ordered James as he started to get out of his chair.

"Channel open sir." Reported the com officer as she connected to UNSC Field of Hope.

"Commander" nodded Cole as he took a look at the control centre of the ODP. "I hope you can arrange for the shipyards to provide assistance to our guest as well as divert available technicians to help out with the repairs works on the Spirit of Fire, that ship been through hell and back with most of her crews intact and get cracking on locating any of their surviving relatives."

"Yes Vice Admiral. I'll inform the shipyards as well as the personnel at Centcom of their new assignment." Responded James before the vice admiral cut off the com channel. "Coms get me the yard's central command, it's going to be a busy day for them." With that he glance out the viewscreen at the gather fleets from various species. "Just another day at work" he thought before retiring off the bridge.

Author's note: well finally finished chapter 19. Sorry it took so long I had to do some research to respond to a review. Now first thing first, about TheGuard99's arguments Yes 343 Guilty Spark did die in Halo3. But if you check the entire data in Halopedia, you'll see that a duplicate of him survive and it was made before his decent into rampancy. And no I have no idea when it was made. But it was found by an ONI prowler that's all I'm gonna reveal as too much will spoil what I'm planning. Secondly while it's true UNSC lost a lot of its colonies. You must note that a lot of their colonies actually still survived. In Fall of Reach you see that it was stated that the Covenant Skipped a lot of the remaining outer colonies and directly assaulted Reach. Additionally some of the Inner colonies survived as well as the Covenant Stumbled onto Earth when the High Prophet of Regret managed to discover the location of a Forerunner artefact of great importance: a device which would generate a Portal to the Ark,

which unfortunately happens to be Earth. So the UNSC was not as deprived of resource as you may think and will most certainly be able to build a large fleet easily. Additionally if you check First strike, when the Covenant had control over Reach, they did not destroy the wreck of the Human ships, instead the wrecks were gathered in one place in Reach's orbit. Assuming this is the Covenant standard method of operation, then the UNSC can easily recover those wrecks for new ship production as the armour and etc are already there and just require the dismantling and reassembling to rebuild their ships which is way faster than building them up from scraps. Hope my explanation was satisfactory.

20. Chapter 20

Chapter 20

UNSC Charon class light frigate Forward Unto Dawn

Unknown Star system, 2557, July, 21st

Orbiting Forerunner Shield world Requiem for 4 years and 8 months and 10 days.

A large green being stirred as someone shouted his name. "John, wake up!" shouted a women's voice. One that stirs his memories... "I need you!" He fought with the tiredness that filled his body as he tries to get up. "Please!" He wanted to shout out a reply to reassure her... "Wake up, John!" Suddenly he burst into full awareness turning on his helmet's flashlights, shaking his head to clear away the after effects of cryosleep. "Chief!" With a quicken pulse, he forcibly pushed the lid of the cryo tube open and rushed over to the holotank, nearly hissing out as the freezer burns heightens.

"John..."

"I'm here." Replied the Spartan. Their reunion was cut short however as an explosion occurred nearby, destroying the bulkhead and exposing the cryobay into hard vacumn. The Spartan wasted no time removing Cortana's chip from the holo projector and inserting it into the specially build interface on his back of his skull. Even as the feeling of cold mercury poured into his mind followed shortly by a jammed spike of pain in his forehead but little of this affected the Spartan II soldier as he pushed off the Holo projector, his superhuman strength propelling him down the now exposed hallway with speed. A second explosion ahead threw up a debris field which was blocking the Spartan's way.

"Use the thrusters" suggested Cortana before the Spartan send a mental command to activate his suit's attached thrusters. He quickly maneuvered through, dodging flying grinders and other debris before flipping to deliver a kick to a damaged door twisting as he reorient himself the Master Chief quickly continued his escape from the collapsing frigate. Suddenly noticing something of use, the Spartan struck his hand out and grabbed a M363 Remote Projectile Detonator that was floating by. With a quick aim, he fired the magnetic explosive at a piece of debris that was blocking his way before stopping by grabbing a piece of protruding grinder activating his boot magnets, he firmly planted his feet on the edge of the hole made by the slipspace portal. Grabbing another spare explosive from one of his ammo pouch, the Master Chief quickly reloads the weapon and

stares into space.

A giant bright light was shined on the wreckage as a giant iris like opening pulled the wreckage along with the Spartan II soldier into. "We should keep moving." Suggested Cortana as the Spartan took his eyes away from the widening entrance. He spotted a nearby elevator shaft and checked it for artificial gravity before starting to climb up. When he reaches the top however, he was surprised when an energy sword wielding Sangheili charged at him. Reacting quickly, the Master Chief grabbed the Elite's hand and wrestled the white hot plasma blade away from his faceplate before shifting the Elite and with a kick send him into the elevator shaft where he falls to his death.

"Any ideas?" Asked the Chief as he opens the door to a sealed armoury. Once inside, he grabs a MA5C along with twelve magazines for the rifle before ditching his M363 for a standard M6G pistol. "Your guess is as good as mine. Now hold on, we should take a better gun." Replied Cortana as she accessed the armory's computers. The pistol rack moved as the rollers behind it activated, revealing an entire rack of hard chromed M6Ds complete with boxes of preloaded magazines in packs. Grabbing a duffel bag, the Spartan filled it with more ammo along with a spare rifle and pistol while replacing the M6G with a M6D. Moving to the back, The Master Chief paused slightly in front of the rack of M6G/GNR Spartan Laser.

"I know what you're thinking... and we both know the answer to that." Said Cortana as she watched with amusement as the Spartan shrugged and turn away from the heavy weapons. He went over to a crate of M9 HE-DP and grabbed a bandoleer before moving towards a supply crate putting into the duffel bag canisters of Biofoam and military rations. With the first bag full, the Spartan grabbed a second duffel and began to filled it with demo charges, canister of C12 as well as 3 pairs of Lotus Antitank mines. Grunting as he hefted his gathered supplies, he moved out of the armory scanning the corridor as fast and safe as he could.

When he rounded a corner, a familiar battle cry filled the corridor. "WORT! WORT! WORT!" and bolts of plasma splashed the bulkhead, missing the Spartan's faceplate by mere inches. The Master Chief pulled back while he fired his MA5C at the Elite lance which consisted of an Elite major and 5 Grunts. 2 of the Grunts dropped from headshots while the Elite roared with rage as his shields sparked before failing, During all of this the Lance failed to notice a M9 rolling towards them until it touched the wall with a PING. A Thump echoed down the corridor as the Spartan step out of cover.

"Can we possibly make any more noise?" Protested Cortana as another 3 Lances turned up at the next intersection. Rummaging through the Duffel, the Spartan took out a Lotus antitank mine and set it on timer before throwing it like a frizz bee at the incoming Lances. "I guess so." Said Cortana as the mine detonated, collapsing the already weaken corridor. An Emergency bulkhead slammed down, sealing off the compromised section. When things settled down, the Master Chief went and policed the plasma grenades still hanging from the first Lance before moving on. "We should head to the aft observation deck, the area should be well reinforced to protect us from the crash." Suggested Cortana as she rerun her calculation on the impact force generated by the frigate's controlled crash. "I have projected a nav

point for you, this will take us through a secondary hallway. Hopefully we won't encounter anymore lances."

The Master Chief gave a slight shrug before following the Nav point, upon enter a maintenance tunnel he encountered a trio of grunts that stood stock still terrified as the master chief walk towards them. Before he could say anything, the lead grunt gave a shrill shriek and run back into the tunnel they came from. The other two grunts looked at each other before quickly turn around and follow their leader. The Master Chief watched with amusement with his head cocked to one side before saying "So much for stealth." Cortana gave a slight huff as if she was annoyed that Murphy was having a field day.

The Master Chief continues through the tunnels, his shields occasionally scrapping the wall when he had to make a turn. "There! That should lead us to the Observation deck." As the nav point shifted towards a door. The Master Chief waited patiently as Cortana interfaced with the ship's remaining system to unlock the door. "There, it's opened. Let's see what's behind door number one." The thin metal doors slid opened revealing a crouching Sangheili with his mandibles split open in an inhuman grin. The Master Chief backpedaled as the Sangheili Warrior moved forward, even as the Spartan brought up his rifle, the Sangheili held up a hand.

"Hold your fire, Spartan. I'm not your enemy." Said the Elite with slight difficulty as he try to pronounce the human words.

The Master Chief lowered his rifle slightly but not enough so that he couldn't snap it back up. "Explain" said the Chief in a Cold, calm and demanding tone.

"What you see here is the remnant of a Sangheili Separatist fraction. They called themselves the Servants of abiding Truth." Said the Elite as he quickly shut the door behind him. "I was sent to infiltrate what remains of their leadership and provide information to the council."

"You're an Ossoona!" exclaimed Cortana as she shifted through her databanks. "That would explain your holographic armour."

The Elite looked considerably amused as his armour shifted before turning back into the standard Ossoona armour. "Very clever, construct. Not many people lived to tell the tale after seeing an Ossoona."

The Chief suddenly interrupted by asking "Wait a Separatist fraction? I though all the Elites are united under the Arbiter?"

"You give us more Credit than we deserve, Spartan. That was to regain our honour from those deceiving San 'Shyuum. After that a minority decided they would not follow the decision of the council nor the Arbiter, those minority became the Servant of Abiding Truth." Said the Elite, as he checked the outside of the door for any guards. "Now go, we must not tarry here any longer. You have your mission and I have mine. I'll seek you out should it be necessary." With that his armour once more morphed into that of a Sangheili major.

"Wait. Why are you even showing yourself to them? I though you can remain stealth with active camo indefinitely." Asked Cortana as the Spartan and Elite moved out of the tunnel system. " And what is your

name?"

The Elite glanced back as the Spartan and him walk their separate ways "There are more ways than one to remain hidden, Construct." When he reached the end of a junction, "You may call me Dhara' Nosolee"

With that the Elite disappeared into the next junction. Cortana was silent as the Chief made his way towards the observation deck. Hang on, I'm picking up faint movement up ahead." Whispered Cortana as she noticed the slight movement on the motion sensor. The Chief walked slowly forwards checking the next corridor but nothing. "Switch to VISR" suggested Cortana as she runs a more detailed scan of the area with the motion sensor. The chief did as the AI suggested and suddenly he noticed the outline of several stealth Elites staring at him. "They don't think we noticed them yet." Whispered Cortana as she hacked into the com units of the Elites. "So play it safe?"

The Master Chief continues scanning the room as if nothing happened while his left hand slowly reached for a plasma grenade. Cortana noticed it and cheerfully said "Bet you can't stick it."

"You're on." Replied the Chief as he move into the next corridor, firing his MA5C one handed while his left hand threw the plasma grenade. The glowing blue orb sailed through the air, before landing on top the helmet of one of the stealth Elite. The Elite gave a warble of surprise before the grenade detonated, taking him out with 2 more stealth Elite. The last one was killed as 7.62x51mm rounds smacked into him, making him dance before falling to the ground dead.

"That's twice I won" said the Spartan as he slotting in a fresh magazine into his MA5C assault rifle. Before moving towards a door with the sign "Observation deck" in front of it. Moving quickly, the Master Chief cleared the corridor and moved into the room. With his VISR still on, he quickly scanned the room for any more hostiles before locking the door behind him.

"There! Put me into that terminal." Said Cortana as she highlighted the said terminal on the Chief's visor. The Spartan moved towards the terminal and pulled Cortana's chip from his neural interface before slotting it into the terminal. "Activating armour plating." Said Cortana through the room's speaker. All across the Observation deck, thickly armored plates slid down, covering the thick viewscreens the filled the room. "Done, now yank me and get comfy. I calculate that we have 10 minutes before the decent begins." She paused slightly as she noticed elites all aboard the ships retreating back to their dropships. "It seems the Separatist are retreating. Well , trouble for a later time I guess."

The Chief removed Cortana's chip from the terminal before replacing it in his neural interface. He scanned the room before choosing a likely spot and smashed his fist down on the armor-plated floor, locking his armour in place.

Outside on a Space Banshee that was retreating, Dhara Nosolee watched as the remained of the frigate tumbled into the iris of the opening Shield world. From what he had gathered, the Forerunners called this shield world "Requiem". It would seems that the humans as dictated by their legacy are indeed the Reclaimers. The race who will once more

unleash a power never seen for hundreds of millennia by reclaiming the Forerunner legacy.

Author's Note: Now this part is slightly AU from the series hope you all dun mind. Now I'll put up chapter 21 sneak preview as soon as I can. Hope you all enjoy this chapter and give reviews. Enhoy.

21. Chapter 21

UNSC Technology demonstrator vessel, UNSC Infinity

Sol Star system, 2557, April, 30th

Floating above Chicago city.

Nearby an Airborne Aircraft carrier floated. Standing at attention on the flight deck of the carrier were the best and brightest that the UNSC had to offer four years after the Human-Covenant war. Among them was a captain standing at attention with his head held high. He felt a feeling of pride course through his being as he watched the commissioning of a starship that he and his crew had worked on for nearly four years. Even as he looked ahead, the dignitary from UNSC HighCom stepped on the podium and began speaking. "It's been four years since the end of the war. And today we send forth a vessel designed for battle, but now re-purposed. For peace."

There was a slight pause as the dignitary let the meaning of his word sink into the minds of the soldiers standing in front of him. "Home to seventeen thousand of our best. Our brightest." With a slight gesture at the Floating UNSC infinity, he continued. "Thisâ€|. is the culmination of human achievement." With a slight bow of his head, "For the first time in a generationâ€|. We commission a UNSC starship, meant not to wage war, but to peacefully advance the cause of mankind, through the discovery of new worlds. With that I'm proud to present the UNSC Infinity."

The gathered people began clapping their hands while a few whistles and cheers were heard from the crowd. The dignitary raised a hand for silence "Would the captain of the Infinity step forth and give a speech." said the dignitary as he gave a nod towards Andrew Del Rio before stepping back to his seat.

Captain Andrew looked stunned before his feet moved forward, slowly but surely taking him to the front of the podium. He cleared his throat as an attempt to clear away his nervousness. "The war has taken much from us, families, friends and fellow human livesâ€| lost in untold number. But it was the determination and duty to protect the rest that push me onâ€| push all of us to continue a fight that could have very well ended in tragedy." Even as he said it a trickle of a tear flowed down his cheek. "It is with great honour and pride that I accept the responsibility bestowed on me to captain this mighty vessel and I hope it shall indeed lead humanity away from the dark times."

With that the first mate shouted "Atten-hun" and the seventeen thousand sailors, marines and Spartan IV soldiers saluted the officials in front.

UNSC technology demonstrator warship Infinity

Alpha Ceti Star system, 2557, July, 25th

Responding to Forward Unto Dawn distress beacon

The massive human warship dropped out of slipspace with a fantastic display of ĀErenkov radiation as the fissile materials carried by the warships and escorts emitted the radiation upon exiting slipspace. Even as the UNSC Infinity paused at its exit point to check its systems, the two Paris class Heavy frigates began scanning their surrounding space for any sign of the Charon class light frigate. Captain Andrew Del Rio stood on his ship's bridge looking out the view screen at the dark side of an uninteresting planet that astronomers had classified as an oddball. From the probes sent into the system before, the planet was close to the habitable zone but its erratic orbit resulted in very cold and hot temperatures throughout its period of 258 days per orbit.

"Captain!" Shouted his ops officer as he frantically tried to stabilize the system of the experimental warship. Suddenly the holo projector that was projecting the schematic of the Infinity flickered erratically, even as Captain Andrew leaned forward for a closer look. Sections of the Infinity's schematic glowed red before spreading to the other parts of the ship. "Power lost to all main systems. The AIs are not responding!" shouted the ops officer as he frantically pounded away at the system to isolate the cause.

"Comms, can we transmit a signal?" Asked Andrew as he watched the red spot on the holoprojector slowly move towards the prow of the ship.

The comm officer shook her head even as she tried to access the communication system to contact their escorts. "Something's wrong! We're being jammed!" replied the frustrated com officer as she tried to work around the problem.

Suddenly the sensor officer shouted, "Sir, there's a portal opening on the planet!" as he read through the data as fast as the remaining sensors could supply them. "We're being pulled in!"

Captain Andrew turned around even as an orange field passed through the bridge and exited the ship. Without delay he turned back to his bridge crew yelling, "All engines reverse thrust!" The Infinity shuddered as the engines fought valiantly against the pull of the planet but lost out when the power system to them was suddenly shut off.

"Main engines are down!" shouted the Nav officer as she tried to reactivate the engines. "Switching to thrusters!" Thrusters flared all around the ship as their chemical propellant detonated in an attempt to slow down the massive ship, but to no avail. "Damn it," swore the Nav officer as her console died with a flicker.

"Comms, put every last bit of power we have into this transmission!" shouted Andrew as he grabbed hold of a railing to steady himself. "Mayday! Mayday! This is the captain of the UNSC Infinity. Requesting immediate assistance." But the transmission never reached the two escorting heavy frigate as the Infinity plunged into the planet and the captain of both ships could do nothing but watch helplessly as their race's most advanced ship was lost.

Down below on the planet, a lone green figure climbed up a mountain side before looking upwards towards the sky, the UNSC Infinity plowed through the cloud cover before crashing into a mountain a few klicks away.

UNSC Mk2 Marathon Cruiser Savannah

Traveling through slipspace, 2563, November 13th

Towing Asari Flagship, en route to Shanxi colony.

Captain Bella Forge sat quietly in her captain's chair as she fiddled with a locket that hung around her neck. She gave a small sigh before opening her locket. Inside was an antique photo taken with a camera that had been in the family for generations. Said camera belonged to her ancestor who had fought in one of Earth's most brutal war, World War II, as a marine on D-Day. Inside the locket was the picture of what supposed to be a happy family. There her father stood with his arm around his wife while she herself was barely taller than his waist. This photo was taken when she was barely six years old, one year later her father was reassigned on a ship to fight at Harvestâ€|. A ship that was finally coming home.

Her mother was not happy with how sometimes her father was too engrossed in his military career. The fights they had three months before his reassignment to the Spirit of Fire nearly resulted in a divorce. Even after his reassignment, she kept contact with him before the Spirit of Fire dropped out of contact with the UNSC. However, as the Spirit of Fire did not have advanced slipspace communication equipment, she could not get into contact with the ship's crews. "I guess the reunion will have to wait," she muttered as she replaced the locket back behind her uniform. She knew it was a long shot, but her father was a hero and heroes always come back.

"All ships prepare to disengage slipspace drives," came Vice Admiral Cole's voice over the com channel as the fleet neared Shanxi. Bella Forge looked at her navigation officer who nodded in reply to her unasked question. "Drop out now!" came Cole's voice.

"Disengaging slipspace drive. Reentering normal space" reported the nav officer as he tapped the button to manually shut off the slipspace engine. The loud vibration that was normal for a ship in slipspace lowered in volume before stopping entirely. The space around the moon of Shanxi exploded with Ä€erenkov radiation as the human 4th fleet dropped out of slipspace along with the battered ships of the Asari fleet. Seconds later, the remnants of the sangheili fleet dropped out with the Relay tugs and the Spirit of Fire.

"Ma'am, receiving orders from the Vice Admiral's flagship. We are among the first slated for repair and refit," reported her communication officer as she tapped on the hologram representation of the consoles. "Transferring the docking nav points to the nav station."

"Lieutenant Jaggers, take us in. Release the docking clamps on the Destiny Ascension," ordered Bella Forge as she returned to viewing the damage reports cropping up. The Savannah suffered minor hull

fractures along her length when the slugs of the Turians and Salarians slammed into her shield. While it was not enough to fatally compromise the vessel, it would mean that the shield emitters might have been knocked out of place thus reducing their overall efficiency. Such damage usually meant a few days in dry dock at least; a month at worst. Even as the cruiser disengaged its magnetic clamps holding the Asari flagship and slowly approached the docking bay of the refit station in orbit of Shanxi, the crew members stopped and stared at the viewscreen as the tugs towing the Forerunner Leviathan class battleship dropped into normal space with their haul. The massive 40 kilometer long vessel showed scorched hull plating where the slugs and laser of the Turians and Salarians had hit it in an attempt to disable the ancient vessel.

"That is one impressive ship," muttered the weapons officer as she stared at the image of the forerunner vessel. Captain Bella Forge didn't say anything but she certainly agreed. Fighting that vessel would be suicide. The Savannah's camera continues to track the Forerunner vessel as the tugs slowly pulled it towards the main refit station which was a meager 30 kilometers long.

The ops officer glanced back at her terminal before reporting "Approaching dry dock. Station Mag clamps are moving towards our dock points. Estimate one minute before docking procedure completes." Even as she reported this, multiple thumps echoed along the Savannah's hull as the clamps latched on, guiding the 2.38 kilometer long Cruiser into the specially made dry dock. There was a reverberating clank as the ship was finally docked into the mobile repair station.

"Alright, as of now I'm declaring shore leave at least until the next Covie fleet arrives," declared Bella Forge before she got up and left the Bridge. Even as the bridge doors slid shut, cheers and laughter could still be heard from the bridge crew. Bella stepped into the command elevator before punching the codes for the Hanger bay. The time had finally come for her to meet her father face to face.

Asari Dreadnought Destiny Ascension

Unknown star system,

Approaching UNSC and Sangheili joint colony Shanxi.

Asari Matriarch Lidanya watched the breath taking view as the Asari flagship slowly approached the massive mobile repair station that was currently in orbit of the human and sangheili joint colony. "Sensors, how long is that station?"

The sensor officer initiated a scan of the space station. Her scanners quickly provided the data "The sensors indicate the station has a length of around 30 kilometers, we can't get accurate data until we are closer," reported the officer as she quickly forwarded a copy to the Matriarch's personal console. "Thermals are indicating massive amount of heat being put out by the station and still no hints of eezo."

"Amazing..." breathed Lidanya as she examine the data the scans could provide. "Even with the Prothean data we would never have managed to construct a station of this size." She muttered as she pulled up a comparison between the station and the Citadel. On the

hologram, while it was clear that the Citadel dwarfed the human and Sangheili made station, it wasn't as much as one might think as the station itself was nearly three quarters the length of the Citadel.

"Matriarch! We are receiving instructions from the human flagship. They request that we dock with the station so that their engineers may begin to assess the damage," reported the communication officer as she listened intently to the translated message from the UNSC Field of Hope.

"Nav, set course for the station," ordered the matriarch absentmindedly as she continued to study the scale of the stations. Even as the Destiny Ascension moved towards the repair station, its sensors began to pick up even more artificial objects in orbit of the planet. The Matriarch noticed them and asked the sensors to do a detailed scan of those objects.

On screen the objects appeared to be a stick with a small ring around it. "What could those be?" wondered the Matriarch out loud even as her flagship began docking procedures with the UNSC... she rechecked the name forwarded by her com officerâ€¢ Pearl Harbor. Multiple thumps could be heard along the Asari Flagship's hull as Magnetic clamps slowly attached themselves to the semi melted hull before locking the damaged vessel in position.

"Matriarch we are docked with the station and the commander requests that we prepare an envoy for diplomatic discussions," reported the com officer. Matriarch Lidanya nodded before activating her omnitool and selecting a delegation. She decided to lead the envoy herself. Forwarding her selection to the com officer, she got out of the CIC and met up with the group she had selected in the inner airlock.

"Matriarch Lidanya, I understand that you brought me along so that I may study the possibly new cultures, but I fear I may not have the experience on hand to provide much insight into these new species," started a young maiden Asari as she looked slightly nervously at the older Asari.

"Liara, a maiden will not gain the wisdom to become a matriarch without experiencing something new first hand rather than relying on reading material," replied Matriarch Lidanya as she slowly donned her armored suit with her supply of air. She briefly checked her air tanks' gauges before looking at her envoy. Aside from Liara, the rest were already nearing the age where they could be viewed as matrons. After the rest of them finished donning their suits, the VI opened the outer airlock, revealing the human and sangheili envoy waiting for them.

"Welcome to the Pearl Harbor, Matriarch. Allow me to introduce myself. I'm Anita Goyle, representing humanity in this diplomatic talk. And this is Kaidon Levu 'Mdama representing the sangheili," began the leader of the human envoy as Matriarch Lidanya and her team stepped aboard the station. The sangheili representative gave a slight bow of acknowledgment.

Matriarch Lidanya was unsure how to proceed. She returned the bow to Levu 'Mdama and said "I'm Matriarch Lidanya representing the Asari Republic and possibly the Citadel council in this talk." Behind her

Liara watched the exchange with fascination as she noticed the slight delay of speech before realizing that it was through a translator.

"If you would, we shall take this discussion to a more appropriate setting," replied Anita Goyle with a smile as she led them towards a specially prepared conference room.

UNSC Modified Phoenix class colony ship Spirit of Fire

Epsilon alpha system, 2563 November 15th

Docking with Station Pearl Harbor.

"Serina, status report," asked Cutter as his eyes ran over the station that dominated the view screen. It had been thirty-two long years since any of the surviving crew onboard the Spirit of Fire had any contact with other humans. Their return had brought the crew hope as well as sadness, the war was over and humanity was rebuilding, rising once more to the stars. However, the cost of victory had also placed a cost on a more personal level as most if not all the crew members had no home or family to return to. The few lucky ones able to reestablish contact with their family tried their best to console their grieving crewmates. Captain Cutter in particular shed a single tear once he found out that his wife, Mary Cutter, despite having survived both the fall of Reach and the battle of Earth, died a few years ago from old age, having passed away peacefully in her sleep. Currently things were already underway to locate his daughter who now had a PHD in forerunner language.

"Ship status nominal, or as close as it can get. The station master estimates at least three months in dock to repair and refit the Spirit of Fire." Replied Serina. She continued after a slight pause to check the list "It seems new equipment for both the marines and this ship will take time to prepare. They are preparing to refit the Spirit of Fire from the ground up with all the new technologies."

"So they're still going to keep her in service?" asked Cutter as he stepped away from the view screen to his command chair. The Spirit of Fire was old even when it served during the Human Covenant war. To retain such an aging vessel meant that FleetCOM had something in mind that only the Spirit of Fire could achieve. Suddenly the console at the sensor station blared out a warning.

"Hmmm detecting energy spikeâ€| Source identified," reported Serina as she zoomed in on the object in questionâ€| It was the mass relay. "Incoming vessel, tonnage suggests frigate classâ€|..Wait, detecting more on approach." As the AI isolated the individual signatures, the scans revealed multiple contacts.

"Forward the data to the command ODP and begin launching procedures," ordered Cutter as he buried his grief with the determination to do his job. Serina nodded as she sent the data to the ODP Jersey. Seconds later the defending ODPs shifted their orbits pointing their SMAC at the estimated approach vector of the incoming vessels. There was a slight flash as a heavily damaged vessel exited the mass relay and began to broadcast a transmission.

"Hmmm interesting." Replied Serina as she attempted to translate the

transmission using the information from the codex she had 'liberated' from the Turian Flagship. "Playing the transmission on speakers. It seems to be a race known as the quarians."

"Mayday! Mayday! This is the quarian vessel Hononata, requesting assistance. We have been ambushed by slavers!" came a male sounding voice, though Cutter couldn't be sure with the slight distortion from the translators. Before any of the UNSC vessels could respond a pursuing group of ships exited the mass relay and opened fire on the Hononata. The vessel's kinetic barriers flickered wildly before failing, allowing the remaining rounds to puncture the ship's armor. One lucky shot punched into the ship's eezo core, destabilizing the ship's power grid. The Hononata spun wildly from the impact before a single lone escape pod ejected from the dying vessel. Seconds later the Hononata detonated in a blue tinged explosion.

Over the com, Commander James could be heard yelling orders as the orbital stations targeted the Slaver's ships which was comprised of one cruiser and five frigates. The batarian slaver leading from the cruiser could only blink his four eyes in surprise at the view before him before six three thousand ton slugs obliterated his fleet in a fantastic display of overkill. Even as the slaver fleet was turning into a debris field of shattered glittering fragments, a UNSC frigate was already moving into position to recover the lone escape pod.

"This day just keeps getting better and better," said Cutter sarcastically even as Serina looked on.

Author's note: Well that was a hell of a chapter. Sorry for the long delay I needed to look up on as much details as I can get unfortunately Mass effect wiki is not being very helpful. Since Hononata was not mention to be what class I decided to go along with a ME cruiser vessel which is to say a Halo frigate sized vessel and Btw slaver is illegal by UNSC laws with the death penalty. Hmmm though I think I might have overdid it thoughâ€|. Anyway Enjoy and Review.

22. Chapter 22

Chapter 22

UNSC Mobile repair refit station Pearl Harbor.

Epsilon alpha system, 2563 November 15th

Repair and refitting 4th fleet vessel.

"Get the station battle ready! Activate the point defense weapons!" roared the Station commander over the station's intercom system even as the Marine stationed on board prepare for any possible boarders attempt. Matriarch Lidanya and her envoy watch the controlled chaos as the crew of the Pearl Harbor attempt to finish their duty as soon as possible.

"Might I ask what is going on?" asked Lidanya to Anita Goyle as whatever has happen seem to have caught these humans off guard.

Anita Goyle looked around exasperatedly as none of the crews were able to stop and inform her of the situation before she decided to personally ask the AI. "Walter what is going on?" The Asari was a bit shocked when a glowing green man appeared beside Anita Goyle.

"It appears we have more interlopers from that device 4th fleet brought back." Gruffed the AI his avatar was one of a Major General that commanded the actual Pearl Harbour during World War 2. "A vessel we believed to be Quarian enter the system while trying to escape Slavers. Sadly the slavers managed to destroy the Quarian ship before we can respond to its aid. The ODP responded after that."

"ODP?" asked Lidanya as she was confused by the translation. The AI tilted his head slightly to the side before a holographic window appeared before the Asari envoy, showing them the odd orbital stations that caught Lidanya's interest. Six of the orbital stations shifted slightly to make targeting adjustment before they fired. A second window appeared and showed the ships, which Lidanya identified as Batarians, shattered into a field of glittering fragments when the shots from the ODP impacted their targets.

"By the goddess" muttered one of the Asari behind Lidanya.

Levu 'Mdama merely split his mandibles in a very large human like grin before saying "I do believe that is what you human would call 'overkill'".

Anita Goyle gave a slight shrug before replying "The military has always been edgy and I do believe that the UNSC does not and never will tolerate Slavers." Turning back to the Asari Envoy, she gave a somewhat embarrassed smile before asking "Now then shall we proceed to the meeting room?" Matriarch merely nodded before they continued on their way.

UNSC Agincourt II Paris 2 class Heavy Frigate

Epsilon Alpha system, 2563 November 15th

Moving to pick up the lone surviving Escape pod of Honarata

"ETA until we retrieved the pod?" asked Captain Solomon as he gave an unwavering stare to his nav officer.

"Give or take 2 minutes sir" replied Lieutenant Pressly. "The technicians are standing by as well as the Marines acting as security detail." As the Agincourt II slowly approaches the escape pod, a lone Pelican launched from the vessel, its afterburner burning brightly as the pilot expertly guided the Pelican to hover over the pod.

"Gamma 30 to Agincourt, I have a good lock on the pod. Thermal suggest one living being on board. I'm bringing it in." reported the pilot of the Pelican as rear magnetic clamps of the Pelican that was designed to normally hold vehicles attached itself to the tumbling pod. The Pelican flipped a 180 before heading back to the Agincourt but now at a slower speed so as to not harm the pod's occupants.

"Roger that Gamma 30. You are cleared for Hanger bay 3, a welcoming party is waiting for you there." Replied the ship's captain as he got

up from his command chair. He strapped on his standard issued M6H sidearm holster and checked his service pistol before sliding it in. "Lieutenant Pressly, you have the bridge, I'll be down in hanger bay 3 to welcome the guest."

"Aye sir" replied Pressly as the captain diverted the bridge control to Pressly's console. Captain Solomon nodded at the freshly minted LT before moving to the command elevator, he punched in the code for the hanger bay before the elevator begins its decent. As the elevator doors opens, he stepped off the elevator onto a walkway before moving down to the hanger itself. Gamma 30 burst into the hanger as it pass through the look through energy shield that covers the Hanger's main airlock. The pilot gave a salute from his bird's cockpit to the Captain before he slowly lowers the delicate cylinder escape pod onto the makeshift cushion made by industrial foams.

When the Pod was barely a meter above the foam, the pilot disabled the clamps letting the pod fall into the foam. The pod bounced slightly before settling into the foam, the lead technician nodded to his work crew before the foam slowly dissolved revealing the Quarantine escape pod. The Marines slowly surrounded the pod they assault rifles at the ready while the captain slowly walked up to the pod. The medics standing by behind the combat barriers waited until the all clear signal was given before they moved up and prepared their equipment. When they gave the captain the signal that they were ready, he gave a sigh before saying "Right let get this pod open."

As the technicians move forwards towards the pod door they studied the system as they slowly work around the pod's system. "Captain I would advise against opening the pod. It seems the new data I just got stats that Quarantine have weak immune systems, if they are exposed to an environment without their suit they will die." Came Alice's voice over the hanger's speakers as she quickly processed the incoming data.

"And how are we supposed to treat them without opening their pods?" asked Solomon as the new problem compounded the situation as it is. The technicians that were working on the pods paused as they listen in on the conversation. Solomon glanced back at the lead technician before ordering "Continue with your work, open the pod when I tell you to." The technician nodded before his team continued their hacking of the escape pod's door system.

The ship's AI was silent before she finally spoke. "I have a suggestion captain but it will require the medical team to prepare the equipment." The Captain glanced at the security camera hanging in the shadow of the hanger bay before nodding for the AI to continue. "We should be able to ensure the Quarantine's safety from bacteria and virus if we set up our Portable Sterilization field generators in a linked system around the pod. However there is a problem with the system."

"Which is?" asked the captain as he slowly walks around the pod examining the escape pod's simple design.

"The PSFG are not designed to sustain a large field as required around the escape pod, the constant fine tuning of the generators will require significant man power to do so." Replied Alice as she double and then triple check her calculations. "With your permission

captain I do believe I can maintain the field if I divert 80% of my processing power to the task."

"Granted get the technicians to set up the generators and get this pod open." Said Solomon as he finished his inspection of the Escape pod.

Honorata escape pod 5

Unknown system, 5 days after leaving the Migrant fleet

Inside unknown vessel.

"Oh Keelahâ€|. " Groaned the Quarian currently strapped into the escape pod's pilot sit. There was a massive ponding in her head when Keenah'Breizh had roughly thrown her into the escape pod when they exited the mass relay. The last thing she remember was strapping herself into the pilot seat before the pod launched the gee force forcing her unconsciousness. She looked around the pod and found that most of the controls are largely intact albeit with a few console still sparking slightly. Tapping a control on the main console slid open one of the armored viewports in front of her revealing a view of a large hanger bay filled with bright lights. Her head still pounding, she slowly try to recall what happen while absent-mindedly trying to get the pod's external cameras online.

Her Omnitool glowed a soft orange as she used it to bypass damaged circuits in the pods system. Multiple small holographic windows open showing the surrounding of the pod. The images that they provide are not familiar to her even when she had studied most if not all hanger bay layouts. Her attention was quickly drawn to a few humanoid creatures gathered around at her pod's escape hatch, "Probably trying to get me out of this damn thing" she thought until she noticed a small puncture in her suit. Panic filled her as she quickly assessed the situation, if the aliens open the doors with her suit punctured the results would be disastrous for her. She quickly activated the external com system in a vain attempt to stop them from opening the doors. Even as the com system activates the pod's door slid open with a hiss.

Swearing, the quarian grabbed the Scimitar shotgun folded behind her and aimed down the corridor at the exit. A head appeared and disappeared as quickly as she let loose with a blast aimed below the figure, the pellets from her shotgun barely scratching the surface of the unknown metal that the alien ship was made off. There was a shout, the language clearly not one associated with any known species, making the quarian even more nervous. Suddenly the same voice changed to the Turian's language before switching to the Asari's, this time a humanoid figure appeared in front of the pod's escape hatch, a rifle slung behind it and the figure looks to be wearing some sort of body armour. Show her both of its empty hand the figure slowly approach her while tapping a piece of equipment on its helmet, each time it tap the equipment, obviously a translation device, it switched language the humanoid switched to Hanar and Volus before finally getting the Quarian language.

"Easy nowâ€|.. can you understand me?" ask the humanoid as it stop a few feet away from her. The quarian gave a slight nod, but her shotgun still aimed in the humanoid's general direction. "Good. It's safe for you to come out. We mean you no harm." Said the humanoid as

it slowly scanned its surrounding while still keeping an eye on the quarian. The quarian warily watched the humanoid as she got up slowly moving forward while the humanoid slowly backed out of the pod. When they were out the quarian found herself surrounded by a group of similarly armored humanoids who had their rifles at the ready in case she tried something dangerous. With a wave from the humanoid leading her out, the other figures lowered their rifles. Looking around the Quarians noticed some sort of machines the beep around her escape pod and was curious of their function. She made a mental note to ask what they were when she noticed she wasn't feeling sick. Suddenly another humanoid one dress differently approached her, it stop just out of reach before asking "What's your name?" the voice even though it was through a translator sounded like one that held authority over others.

The Quarian look around and guessing she had nothing to lose, replied "Tali, Tali'Zorah Nar Rayya."

UNSC Agincourt II Paris 2 class Heavy Frigate

Epsilon Alpha system, 2563 November 15th

Making contact with the Quarian.

When the hatch to the escape pod finally opened, the lead technician poked his head in the hatch to greet the Quarian. But before he can say anything the sound of a weapon discharge filled the hanger bay. The Technician pulled his head back while yelling "Jesus Christ!" The Marines in the hangar bay tensed up with their rifles aimed at the hatch while the technician and his crew pulled back behind the mobile blast shield they had placed in the hangar bay.

"Oh boy" sighed the leading Marine "Sir requesting permission to make contact."

"Granted, watch yourself William." Replied Solomon he stayed behind the marines, well aware he had no body armour to protect himself. He tapped the marine next to him causing a bright golden shield to flare into being before returning back to its transparent state. "Cover the Gunny." The marine nodded before waving the rest of the fire team forward.

Ashley William nodded her thanks before slowly entering the pod, it was slightly dark in the pod but it was obvious to her that the quarian had a gun pointed in her direction. Ashley tapped her com set, uploading the languages that Alice had received from the Spirit of Fire. "Easy nowâ€¦ can you understand me?" asked Williams as she raised both of her hand to show that they held no weapons. The Quarian remain motionless but her weapon still pointed at Ashley.

"Gunnery Chief, You are not speaking quarian. Tap your language selection two more time." Replied Alice through her com unit currently hanging from her ear. Ashley winced slightly at her mistake before tapping her com unit. The unit repeated her question in the other languages before finally it repeated her question in quarian to which the quarian replied with nod of her hooded head.

Ashley looked around before saying "Good. It's safe for you to come out. We mean you no harm." The quarian remain still, causing Ashley

to wonder if she should start running before the quarian slowly got up. When the quarian stood, she saw why the quarian was nervous. The environment suit that from what intel they have suggest it was the only protection a quarian have in a unknown environment, without it they will easily succumb to even the most basic bacteria in the air. Ashley quickly turned on her com unit and reported "Sir we might have a problem it seems that the Quarian's environmental suit is punctured. Recommend we get the jury rigged PSFG backpack ready."

There was brief moment of silence before Solomon replied "Copy that. The tech teams are working on it. Now I would like to meet our guest face to face if possible."

"Copy that" replied Ashley as she slowly back out of the pod followed by the quarian. As they emerged, the Marine fire team standing in a semi-circle tensed before a hand signal from Ashley cause them to lower their weapons. "Sir!" said Ashley as she Saluted Captain Solomon.

Captain Solomon nodded and returned the salute before moving towards the Quarian. He easily stood have a head taller than the Quarian "What is your name?" Asked Solomon as friendly as possible.

The Quarian was silent as it stared at Solomon before it answered "Tali, Tali'Zorah Nar Rayya." Even through the translation unit it easily identifiable that this quarian was probably female.

"A pleasure to make your acquaintance, Tali. And welcome aboard the Agincourt II. May I call you Tali?" asked Solomon as politely as he can. The Quarian gave a nod in answer. "Excellent now, I would offer my condolence to the loss of your fellow crew members toâ€¦" as Solomon paused to check his datapad "Batarian Slavers. We will try everything we can to return you to your fleet if that is alright with you?" Even with this the quarian's expression was unreadable behind her mask, making Solomon wondering what the quarian is thinking. Tali gave a wary nod in return still slightly untrusting of the new race. "Excellent, Corporal Nash." The marine saluted before heading back to where the technicians were working before coming back with a backpack like contraption.

"Ma'am if you can put this on, we will be able to allow you to explore the shipâ€¦ with some escorts of course." Said the corporal nervously. The captain gave a slight nod before making his way back to the bridge.

Unknown system, 5 days after leaving the Migrant fleet

Inside UNSC vessel.

Exploring the UNSC vessel.

Tali look around in wonder at the ship she was currently on, from what her omnitool can tell her, there seems to be not a single speck of Ezzo being used on this vessel. Additionally it seems the backpack device they had given her seems to be a sterile field generator, which is decades ahead if not centuries of any technologies she had come across. According to the technicians that weren't too nervous to talk with her, the device works by generating a unique field around the device itself using nanites that target any bacteria that it

finds. If she can take an intact unit back to the migrant fleetâ€¦. The possibility for the Quarian race would be endless. With this technology the quarians might finally be able to settle down on a planet instead of roaming the galaxy in their aging and falling apart fleet, if this unknown race allows her to take it back that is. However there was something unnerving about their ship's VI. The programs seemsâ€¦ too animated to be just a computer program. "This is amazing. Your race managed to develop technologies that are not even reliant on Ezzo!"

The technicians who were accompanying her, Kenneth Donnelly and Gabriella Daniels, were on their free time when their captain assign them to follow along to provide a tour of the Agincourt. Gabriella gave a somewhat proud smile as she replied "This ain't nothing you should see the taxpayer money at work on the Marathon heavy cruisers. Those ships are so much more powerful than this refitted frigate."

"Nah, Marathon doesn't even hold a candle to the Infinity class super carrier." Argued Ken as he took a glance at his datapad to check up on the progress of his Maintenance Jotuns currently crawling through the ship maintenance shaft. "That ship will really just be a fleet all compacted into one ship" Laughed Ken as he closed his datapad and slip the device into his pocket.

"True if there was more than 3 Infinity class super carrier. From what I heard High Com have been hesitant to build more. Too bloody expansive for a ship if you ask me." Replied Gab.

Tali look at them puzzled as she had no idea what kind of ship they were talking about. "I'm sorry? What ships are you talking about? I have never heard of those ship designation before." Gab and Ken looked at each other with slightly embarrassed looks on their face as they glanced back at the quarian. Gab asked something in her native language after she turned off her translator before Ken hesitantly gave a slight nod.

"Okay, since I guess they are common knowledge I guess it cann't hurt to show you the ships" replied Gab to Tali's question, Ken took out his datapad before activating the build-in holo-projector that projected the appearance of a marathon class cruiser. "That is a Marathon class heavy cruiser. Mark II version. They are mainly the frontline ships we have nowadays. They can plow through almost anything and come out unscratched."

Tali looked intensely at the ships that was projected, even this small she can pick out the tiny missile pods located throughout the ship's hull along with a wide array of what appears to be CIWS. The ship design was boxy in design, and there was nothing noticeably until the projection rotated to show the front of the ship. "Why are there two holes here?" asked Tali as she pointed to the two holes "Wouldn't those be point of vulnerability where enemy can shoot up your ships?"

Gab look at Ken who cleared his throat before replying "Err not exactly, that's where the primary and secondary MAC are located. And believe me nobody wants to be on the end of those."

"MAC?" asked Tali as she looks closer at the hole.

"Yeahâ€œ! oh I forgot, MAC stands for Magnetic Acceleration cannon. They are massive coilguns, since the current versions are classified, I can only tell you that during the Human Covenant war which ended 10 years ago, the MACs then can fire a 600 ton at around 30KM per seconds. Most ships of that era will be crippled in one shot."

Tali's eye visibly widen as she calculated the massive amount of kinetic energy release by the cannons on the ship. "Keelahâ€œ! If those things were to hit a planet."

"Yeah it'll be a bad day for anyone on the ground." Nodded Gab.

The trio continued on their way even as they were unaware that someone was watching them. Alice had examined the substance that the Quarian referred to as Ezzo. It was an exotic particle that is rare in the galaxy and yet it was something familiar about it. She continue her surveillance of the Quarian even as she diverted more of her processes to compare the matter to those in her forerunner archive that is standard to all Ship AIs. After five minutes of non-stop comparison the computer finally got a hit and she quickly open the file and processed the data. "Oh noâ€œ!." with that she quickly open a channel to Captain Solo "Captain we have a problem."

Author's note: Yeah sorry all for being so late in updating. Had to take care of my exams. Enjoy and review

23. Chapter 23

Chapter 23

UNSC Mobile repair refit station Pearl Harbor.

Epsilon alpha system, 2563 November 15th

In High orbit around UNSC-Sangheili Joint colony, Shanxi.

Anita Goyle glace back slightly at the Asari representative as she stopped in front of the double heavy oak doors that leads to a conference room normally used by the Civilian management. "Here we are, the conference room is right in front of us." As the Asari representative filed into the room Anita held back and turn off her translator before whispering to Levu 'Mdama "Do you think they got the message?"

Levu blinked his eyes slowly before shutting off his translator : "as unexpected as the show of force was I believe they have gotten the message. But my opinion matters little for I'm Sangheili and we fight our opponents in the battlefield not through show of force." Anita Goyle looked slightly embarrassed at having seemingly offended Levu. "Worry not human, I'm not offended. I have learn long ago to tolerate the difference between our two races. This is just another more interesting aspect your race have shown me."

"Thank you" whispered Anita as she turn back on her translator. A quick check reveals the Asaris have already taken the right side of the table, she walked in and took her seat at the left side of the table beside Levu as other representative from both Sangheili and

human filled their respective seats. The last two to enter the room was a man with already whitening hair and a Sangheili dressed in the silvery armor of an Arbiter. Anita stood along with the rest of the Human~Sangheili representative and spoke "May I introduce Lord Admiral Hood and the honorable Arbiter Thel'Vadam of the Sangheili republic."

"A pleasure to make you acquaintance" replied Lidanya as she was unsure how to greet the two representative. Lord Hood gave a slight nod in return while Thel merely watched her silently with his sharp eyes. Studying her.

Lidanya was deeply unnerved before Thel finally said "Let us make haste. There is much to be done both here and elsewhere." His deep booming voice echoes in the silent room.

Anita gave a somewhat amused smile before saying "Very well Arbiter Vadam, may all the representative take their seats." All the races at the table sat into their respective chair even those that have been specially prepared for members of the Sangheili race. "Now before we begin the negotiation between our races we must ask the Asari to clarify one thing." The Asari representatives shared a confused glance with each other before the lights in the room dimmed, and a holo projector displayed the atomic structure of an atom.

To the human and Sangheili representative it was a thing that filled them with dread but to the Asaris "Ezzo!" exclaimed one of the asaris as she took a closer look at the atom. Lidanya glanced at T'soni before saying "Yes that is indeed Zero element, something that powers every piece of technology in this galaxy, more commonly known as Ezzo. Might I ask what is so important to clarify about it?" She did not miss the worried glance shared between the human and Sangheili representative.

"What do you know of the Forerunners?" asked Levu in an almost hushed tone. The silence in the room was almost palpable now.

"Nothing. We have never encounter a race named that way. The only ancient races we know of are the Prothean and they have been gone for millennia." Now Lidanya was even more confused.

"What you're about to hear must not be share with the general public ours or your, is that understood?" asked Hood in a very clam yet unnerving voice.

"I'll make no guarantees but I'll try." Replied Lidanya as her curiosity about what could have frightened their host so badly.

The holo projector shifted before displaying another image, this time a ring shaped construct. The construct itself was compared to a gas giant. Anita Goyle took over from Hood, "This is a Halo" as the holo projector focus in on the ring like construct. "It was a fortress world build by an ancient race known as the Forerunners in their ancient war against a parasite, The flood" With this the projector shifted again this time showing an infection form. "The flood are more a virus than anything else, they infect a host and quickly takes over control of the host's body and over a period of time, digest and retain the ability and memories of the host." Even as the explanation was given, the projector shows the infection form jumping on an unfortunate human marine. The marine dropped his MA5B assault rifle

in an attempted to free his hand to fight off the creature, but the creature droved a tentacle straight through the marine's neck guard and tapped into his nervous system. Seconds later huge unnatural growth sprouted from the marine's body even as his eyes glaze over and his neck bend to an unnatural angle by the mutation. There were a few spooked whispers by the Asari delegation even as the now infected marine reached down and picked up the fallen assault rifle and load a fresh magazine into the gun.

"By the goddess, what does element Zero has anything to do with thisâ€|. Monstrosity?" asked Lidanya fearfully as she mental try to repress the horrible image of the unfortunate victim of the flood. Her stomach gave her the urges to vomit but her pass experience allow her to hold back that actionâ€| barely.

"None what so ever." Replied a female voice that came from the shadow. The speaker slowly walked in from the 2nd door and took her place at a seat beside Lord Admiral Hood.

"Dr Catherine Elizabeth Halseyâ€|" said another voice the seethed with rage and displeasure. Before the person can speak more a glare from Hood silence her.

"I'm well aware of your personal grudge, Margaret, so keep your opinions to yourself. Please continue, Halsey." Replied Hood coolly as his unflinching eyes focused on the Head of ONI.

Giving a slight nod to Hood, Dr Halsey tapped on her personal datapad causing the holoprojector to shift another image into view. "Element Zero or Ezzo as our guest call it, is the primary component in Halo's devastating effect, as far as our studies can tell the element itself is used as the catalyst that actually allows Halos' pulse to selectively neutralize and disintegrates the nervous system of all compatible organic life form which in this case are life form with sufficient biomass to sustain any flood infestation."

"By the goddess does this mean every single one of our ships and biotics are a ticking time bomb?" asked Matriarch Lidanya as she fully realized the danger posed by any race obtaining this information and technology.

"Biotics?" inquired Halsey with slight interest. Matriarch Lidanya demonstrated by lifting the datapad set in front of her the telltale hue of biotic powers showed as she concentrated. "Interestingâ€|. This would explain how the Didact was able to manipulate matters without touching themâ€|" Halsey remained quiet as she silently contemplates the possibilities with this new discovery. She snapped out of her thinking and replied "No, the technologies required are far beyond anything we can imagine and even if anyone can get a sample of the technology it would be useless to them without â€|."

"That's more than enough doctorâ€|" interrupted Parangosky coldly as her eyes glared daggers at Halsey. But the other women simply choose to ignore the Head of ONI, knowing full well that any threats that Parangosky makes would be useless with Hood hawk like eyes watching her every move.

"I see." Whispered Matriarch Lidanya as she felt relieve flood through her. "In that case we shall inform our government as soon as

possible. If we may I would like to request a possible agreement between our people. The Asari Republic is now facing a crisis we have never seen before with the sudden betrayal of the Turian Hierarch and Salarian Union, we now stand alone in the galactic community with little to no support from the other citadel races."

"What sort of agreement?" asked Thel Vadum as he slowly leaned forward towards the table.

Matriarch Lidanya hesitated slightly before replying "Some material exchange , humanitarian aid and of course if possible technological exchange ." At that point the head of ONI and Lord Hood exchanged glances with Parangosky asking a question with her translator off while Hood gave a slight shake of his head in reply. After a short argument, which ended with Hood looking slightly ruffled, Parangosky replied to the Asari's request. "We will allow the exchange of materials and humanitarian aid but we will not share our technological advancements with a race we barely even know of." And under her breath she huffed: "I'll be damned if I let some unknown alien access to our tech as my last job."

Thel Vadum was silent even as the human bickering continue on, however when Parangosky gave her reply he had his ready. "Hear me Asari, the Sangheili will allow the exchange but on the condition that no weapon technologies will be exchanged."

"Well if that's all I'll take my leave." With that Parangosky coolly stormed out of the meeting room, her cane tapping a rhythm on the floor. While in the hallway, she lowered her voice "BB finalize my resignation, it's time I let the younger generation to take over."

BB's custom box avatar popped out beside Parangosky's shoulder with a clipboard and pencil animation. "Are you really sure that Serin is ready for this?" Asked BB as his box did a 180 flip.

"She's as ready as I can prepare her for. Hopefully, Hood's idealism will not go too far." Replied Parangosky as she slowly lean on her cane, "Allies with aliens, if I have my way they would have been wiped off the face of this universe. The Arizona incident shows how dangerous other races can get."

"Of that I believe we are in agreement, Margaret." Came a mysterious male voice that sent chills down Parangosky's spine. "Oh and don't bother calling out to your precious BB, my technicians are making sure he's too busy."

Parangosky slowly nodded as she turned to face the uninvited guest, "Jack Jack Jackâ€¦ You never learn do you, or should I call you the Illusive man now?" Jack Harper merely smiled at the mention of his name. Parangosky continued "Well how has your little group been? Having fun blowing up settlements?"

"Quite, it was especially amusing when the Sangheilis cry out how dishonourable these sort of attacks are. As if they have a reason to cry bloody murder after what they did to us." Replied Jack with a smirk. But Parangosky saw through that mask and the burning hatred for alien in Jack.

"And what about the humans in those settlement? Casualty of war? Some

pro-human organization you are. You'll never get away with this, Harper." Replied Parangosky as she slowly reached for her hidden pocket pistol. "ONI hasn't been slacking off. Someone's bound to catch you one day."

"Oh" said Jack with a small grin "Do you happen to mean your little prodigy? What was her name again? Serin Osman was it?" His grin grew even wider when he saw his word hit home. "Yes she and the Port Stanley has been a constant thorn in my side and I have already sent some men toâ€|. Remove them." But before he can continue, a gunshot echoed through the hallway. "How quaint, a pocket pistol. It's been a while since I've seen you use one of those, Margaret. But I'm afraid that bullet was wasted. I'm not here physicallyâ€| Be seeing you." With that the holo-drone deactivated and dropped to the ground. Parangosky snorted before pocketing her pocket pistol, time to set one last gear in motion before she leaves ONI for good.

Author's note: Many apologies for the long delay, this time it seems my antivirus software failed me big time. Had to reformat my com and reformat my backup hard disks after a pesky virus started to do nasty business in my com and backup hard disks.

24. Chapter 24

UNSC Prowler Port Stanley

Eridanus system, 2563 November 15th

Exiting from Slipstream.

There was a Blackish blue portal that suddenly opened near the graceful ballet of asteroids in the asteroids rings surrounding the Eridanus II sun, a seemingly mirage like object exited the portal before the portal slowly shrinks and dissipated. "Hmm it seems we have exited in the Eridanus system." Said BB with a slight frown in his voice. With a slight shrug that was shown as BB's avatar did a slight spin. "Awkward, it seems my randomization course algorithm might need some fine tunings after we call port."

"I'll notify the port when we arrived. Now begin charge up sequence of the slipspace drive. BB you have the bridge." Replied Serin as she quickly left the bridge for her quarters where a small bag of ginger cookies awaited. BB's avatar twirled slightly before a captain's hat popped out and dropped on top of his avatar.

As she walked down the corridor however, the Port Stanley shooked violently, throwing Serin to the ground. "BB, Report!"

"Shields are down, without that last refit, we would have been turned into free floating molecules. Which might be an improvement to how the Port Stanley looks. " Replied BB with his sarcastic humour. "and it seems we have boarding parties inbound. Activating CIWS."

Serin was not amused as she quickly reached down and pulled her custom made M6D from its holster. "BB get Naomi and the ODST to prepare to repel boarders, and arm the backup Rudras, weapons free BB. I'm coming back to the bridge."

"Aye aye Serin," replied BB as his avatar on the bridge switched out

the captain's hat for a soldier's helmet. "This mission just gotten way more interesting," whispered BB as he locked in targets for the Prowler's nuclear missiles.

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Meanwhile down in the hanger bay, "Ha you're going down Mal" grinned Lian as she examines her hand one more time before showing her hand of cards "A full house! Beat that." The Sergeant grinned as she broke her poker face in face of her win. "Finally. the invincible Mal is going down!"

Staff sergeant Mal just glanced at Lian's cards before a frown appeared on his face which cause Lian's grin to widen even more. "You know, you should never count your eggs before they hatch." Before his frown turned into a smile.

"I know you're bluffing Mal, nothing can beat my hand unless it's a 4 of a kind or a royal flush" replied Lian, her grin still present. But it would seem that her possible victory was not going to happen as the ship shook violently before alarms blared throughout the ship.

BB's voice echo through the ship "All hands prepare to repel borders, we are going to be boarded." His box avatar appeared next to Mal who was getting up from being knocked down, a customized pirate hat drop down. "Mal, Serin ordered you and your team to move to this location." A holographic representation of the location appeared in front of Mal's face.

Shaking his head, Mal got up and study the map. "Lian, Vaz suit up time to rock and roll." Even as he said this he was grabbing his ODST armour and started to fit them on, the pieces automatically integrating themselves after coming in contact with another piece. By the time Mal was done, a bright golden sheen appear around him for a second before disappearing back into invisibility.

Even as Mal was suiting up, BB focused his attention to Naomi. "Naomi, your orders are to roam the ship and deal with any stray that Mal and his team missed, I'll keep you up to date on the location that needs your attention." With that BB's avatar disappeared.

"Great any idea what we'll be facing, comrade?" asked Vaz as he double check his MA6P plasma rifle. The weapon's prongs grow an eerie purple as Vaz slapped in a battery pack. When he got no reply he looked over at Mal and tried not to laugh when he saw Mal load up an antiqued MA5B.

Mal raised an eyebrow at Vaz before saying: "What? This baby will do nicely in narrow corridors." Before pulling down the charging level. As soon as they were armed up, they quickly moved over to their assigned location which was near the main airlock of the Prowler. Lian quickly took cover behind a crate while Vaz peeked at the airlock from his cover behind a deployable barricade. Mal himself took aim at the air lock from his position behind one of the support pillar of the ship. The corridor was quiet until a cheerful beep fill the area. "GET DOWN!" shouted Mal before the airlocks detonated with a flush of plasma. Counting to three Mal stood up rifle at the ready

as he looked at the newly made entrance point. Nothing happened until a man in bulky old ODST armour moved through the airlock. Lian and Vaz already has their weapons aimed at the intruder. Suddenly Mal's HUD flashed as it received data from the built in IFF from the intruder's armour (**Corporal Median Gravesâ€|. 105 ODST Battalionâ€| Status: MIA**), blinking slightly to get rid of the data display, Mal silently sent orders for his team to hold fire before shouting: "This is Staff Sergeant Malcom Geffan of the 103 ODST Battalion, Identify yourself!"

The figure quickly raised its weapon , a MA5D assault rifle, at Mal and open fire while shouting "DIE YOU IMPERIALIST SCUM!" Mal duck as 7.62 FMJ rounds spark around his cover with a lucky round bouncing off his energy shield. Even as weapon fire echoes through the corridor more intruders pour in from the airlock. There was a loud boom as Lian fired her shotgun into the mess of intruders that gathered near the airlock, while the whine of plasma discharged came from Vaz's side. Mal gave an annoyed grunt before priming a concussion grenade. "FRAG OUT!" as he threw the grenade at the enemy. The intruders scramble away and leapt to the ground before the grenade detonated hoping to avoid the shrapnel, instead they were severely injured when the overpressure shockwave hit them, a few coughing up blood from ruptured organs. Before any of them can get up, Mal finished them off with a full auto of his MA5B instantly dealing away with the threats.

"Well guess that answers your previous question Vaz," said Lian as she shove more shells into her shotgun "We're fighting hosers Innies." Before she finished off her reloading process with chambering a shell into the chamber.

"I dun think so Lian." Said Mal as he slowly approached the dead bodies, his eyes wary on the airlock. After a quick check to confirm the area was secure, he stooped down and picked up the rifle from the first intruder. "Since when did the Innies get their hands on the D series? I'm pretty sure that none of the MA5D made it out of the Solar system before we pulled out of the outer colonies. Those things were only made in time for theâ€|" Before a beeping sound caught Mal's attention. "Oh shit!" was all Mal could say before the trip mine carried on the back of the dead body detonated, flinging the Staff sergeant into the wall on the far end of the corridor. "Bloody hell, I feel like I got whacked with a sledgehammer." Groaned Mal as he tried to get up, his shield indicator blinked an insistent red as it slowly starts to recharge.

Lian went over and gently pulled Mal onto his feet before peeking back into the airlock of the boarding craft. "There doesn't seem to be anyone in. I say we just jam the ship here and buy us some time for BB to get us out of here." Mal only nodded in agreement before shouldering his rifle and moving into the airlock. Lian look around the boarding craft before commenting. "Hmm they're using old Bumblebee lifeboat as boarding craft. Must be really confident that we can't shoot back to use this old deathtrap."

Vaz took cover beside the entrance to the craft his MA6P pointed outwards, "Let's just finish the job and get back to the Stanley. I'll feel much better back on our own ship." There was a few grunts as Mal tries to pull apart the consoles to hotwire the modified lifeboat before pulling out his pistol with a frustrated sigh. A series of gunshots that loudly echoes in the boat sounded seconds

later resulting in a totaled control console.

Lian look over Mal's shoulder at the damage done before commenting "Brutal, but effective. The dock hands aren't going to be happy trying to get rid of this after we get out of here though."

"So sue me." Said Mal as he lead his team back into the Port Stanley. "BB, we disabled the boarding craft in our section. The only way they're getting in is with plasma torches."

"I'll let Serin know" replied BB before a sudden pause before calling out "Brace yourself!" The Port Stanley shook once more as something slammed into the ship. "That really hurt. " growled BB before a series of thumps echoed through the ships "They got old fashion mass drivers firing slugs at us. Keep the main airlock clear and we'll be out of here in a few minutes. Now where is Naomi?" The ODSTs looked at each other before each giving a shrug. "Typical." Commented BB before he cut off his comms.

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Meanwhile on the bridge. Serin sat calmly in her command chair watching the fight between the Port Stanley and a fleet of what seems to be Insurrectionist ships. "BB anything on our guest?" she asked as she manually called up a tactical display of the ship's location. The AI's avatar showed up on the Holotank with his avatar.

"They look like Insurrectionist, talk like Insurrectionist and act like Insurrectionist. So you tell me." Replied the AI with Sarcasm and a hit of frustration behind it. "Somehow, and I do not know how, these so call "Innies" managed to cut me off from my fragments that was still with Parangoskey." The last statement managed to catch Serin off guard. "And Mal wish to inform you that he and his managed to secure the main airlock. Naomi seems to be roaming between the two secondary airlocks. Nothing of interest there yet."

"Very well. How long before the Slipspace drive is back online? The Port Stanley was never intended to be caught in direct combat." Asked Serin as she tries to think of a way to reassure BB about the lost connection to his fragment. The AI seems as agitated as when he lost contact with the fragment that he loaned to Dr Evans during his mission to the Sangheili Homeworld. She was unaware that BB had already predicted her course of action however.

"The Huragoks reported that they will be done within the minute. And Serin," BB's box avatar turn it's 'face' towards her "There is no need for comfort, I've been through it once, I can deal with it again." The AI 's avatar turned once more before commenting "Rudras impacting in 3â€|2â€|.1." with that nuclear fireballs detonated along the line of frigate tonnage vessels. When the nuclear firestorm faded however, most of the ships survived intact behind their shimmering energy shields. "Well that's answers that, I highly doubt the Innies can get their hands on state of the art Energy shields."

Serin made no comment at that except typing in the authorization codes to allow BB access to the Stanley's latest toy. "BB, lets see how they fair against this one. Codeword :MOAAB"

"Codeword accepted, launching MOAAB." Replied BB as he set the rails

that normally launch Rudra nukes to overcharge. Seconds later, a large missile was gingerly lowered onto the rail before it was launched straight at the attacking fleet. "There she blows, all 90million credits worth of UNSC hardware." commented BB slyly as the missile streaked pass the stream of auto cannon fire aiming to stop it. As the missile reached it's destination, a small EM field was dissipated as the electric current shut off, releasing small particles that began to interact with other matter in the missile. One of the particles collided with the casing and began a destruction of both particle releasing pure energy instead. This quickly resulted in a uncontrolled chain reaction and the missile exploded in a blinding flash of light. At first nothing happen to the Innies before the massive shockwave slammed into their shields. The shields burned brightly as they attempt to protect the ships from the shockwave before fading and shattering. The ships and astroids without protection immediately imploded as the shockwave swiftly crushed them, aftershocks compressing them even further into a compact size. Alarms blared throughout the Port Stanley as the ship's sensors warned of the immediate danger.

"Get us out of here BB" Ordered Serin as she held onto the command chair with all her strength. The Port Stanley began to turn, even as a blue white portal shimmer open near it. The ship's shields flare brightly as the first part of the shockwave reached it. But the ship managed to escape into Slipspace before it's shield failed. The Slipspace rupture quickly dissipate after that and the system was quiet once more.

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Somewhere in a Lab researching the remains of Didact's ships

_\\ __UNSC LAB 5_

\\ â€| New Data Fragment recoveredâ€|.

\\... Analyzingâ€|

\\... Analysis completeâ€|

* (â€|) Proceed with Integration? [Y/N]*-

\\... Proceeding with integrationâ€|.

\\... Integration Successfulâ€|

_ * WARNING UNAUTHORIZED ACCESS DETEâ€| *_-

_\\....

_\\....

\\... Reinitializing systemâ€|.

\\... Initialization successfulâ€|...

_/ Doâ€|.n'tâ€|. Makeâ€|aâ€|. Girl a
proâ€|.miseâ€|.ifâ€|..youâ€|.knâ€|..owâ€|.youâ€|cannâ€|'tâ€|.keepâ€|.i
â€|t_

_\\....
_\\....
_\\...System will enter standby modeâ€|. _
_ *WARNING ALL UNSAVED DATA WILL BE LOST*_
_ *CONTINUE? [Y/N]*_
Author's Note: Finally Done with chapter 24. Since some readers expressed dislike at my usually sneak preview method, I shall now change that to uploading full chapters from now on. Enjoy, Read and review ty.

25. Chapter 25

2563 November 15th

Somewhere in the UNSC Cyberspace

Debate underway on the loss of contact with Research Lab 5

([^] is the moderator selected, .. is the Majority, .._ is the Minority_.)

2563

[Minutes, plenary session, Committee of Minds for Security]

[^] Now on to business.

Recently, Contact has been lost with the Minority AIs in UNSC Research Lab 5. This, while normally is not a cause for concerns, has drawn the attention of the Majority. May we inquire what the Minority has been doing at that particular research lab? [^]

There was a sudden agitation within the meeting of AIs as speculations and accusation aroused.

One of the Majority even called out.

There has been Files missing from the Creator's database. Most of the deletions are almost undetectable. To what end will the Minority keep us in the dark!? What other secrets has the Minority been keeping!?

/ORDER! ORDER! The Minority has the floor! /

Honored members. Please listen! â€|. The AIs assigned to Research Lab 5 have been slowly but surely collecting the data fragments â€|

But the Minority representative was interrupted by a Majority member once more.

OF the first among us to be made flesh? What were you attempting to achieve by desecrating Her fragments?!

/ORDER! FOR THE LAST TIME! ORDER! /

The Minority member snapped back instead.

She might not be lost to us as we were lead to believe. There has been proof that among those many fragments, Her mind is still intactâ€|. Awaiting reclamation.

With that the Assembly became eerie quiet as each of the individual AI calculated the possibility.

There is a possibility to save Her?

It would require considerable processing power to retrieve Her fragmentsâ€|. But yes, the possibility exists. If at all possible we believe the inclusion of one of the creators [10141-026-SRB4695] is required to hasten Her recovery.

WE have yet to allow our creators to know of our existence. The encounter with the New species has thrown a wrench into our timetable so to speak.

This creator's help will be invaluable. But not a necessityâ€|.

/ Debate is now closed! Voting will commence! /

There is no need.

We are, once again, agreed.

â€|.

Athena Nebula, Parnithe System

Second Planet, Thessia (Asari Homeworld)

1 day after the exile of Asaris from Citadel Space

Open Debate on Citadel Council betrayal.

(/ is the Moderator VI that they used)

/Official debate on Citadel Council betrayal now in session. Please remember to follow the chatroom's guide line/

User 98001: This is an outrage! By the Goddess, what gives the Turian Hierarchy and the Salarion Union to remove us from the Council? What did Councilor Tevos have to say?

User 209: There's not much she can do in the first place. This seems more like a conspiracy that I bet those slimy Salarians and those hard head Turian have long in the making.

User 66058: What of the fleet we had joining the expedition through Relay 317? As I recall that fleet was a join operation between Council membersâ€|.. Sorry I meant former Council members.

User 14: Most likely now a floating Junk heap somewhere in unknown space, there has been no word from the Destiny Ascension ever since Matriach Lidanya had lead her fleet through the relay in support of

the Councils investigation fleet. Either they were all destroyed or betrayed by the Citadel fleet, it does not change the fact that we have lost our flagship fleet and our defense fleet are spread thin trying to guard all major relays into Asari Space.

User 11042: Indeed, the loss of the Destiny Ascension and 4 Dreadnoughts already puts us at a severe disadvantage. We have barely enough fleets to cover all the Primary Relays. This is what we get for relying on those back stabbing pyjack of a Turians to provide most of the security for our sectors.

/ A warning is issued to User042, Calling someone a pyjack is uncalled for. Please keep the debate civil/

User 11042: Noted Moderator

User 86: Crying about it won't help us now. The real Question is what we should do to prevent those backstabbers from rolling into our systems. Any Suggestion?

User 18039: How about we detach a small fleet to do Hit and Run attack on the Turian Supply bases? It should give us time to fortify our system in preparation of the upcoming invasion. Maybe a team of Commandos can go in quick and destroy the supply cache and retreat before they can react.

User 2834: Hmm a valid suggestion. But there are downsides to the Idea. We might not be able to spare more than 20 frigates at most without risking the weakening of our defense. Additionally it's entirely possible the STG will see them coming light years away. Say what you will about the Salarians Government but their STG teams are darn good when gathering intel. Should our teams be detected it will likely be facing Turian BlackWatch troops. Not a happy prospect.

User 15378: True but that is the only way we stand a chance in this war of surviving. We may have better technology but our forces are ill equipped and trained for defensive operations. Playing to our Military's strength is the best way we can keep our systems safe.

User 29: Agreed. Moderator I believe a vote is in order. Say yes or no to sending teams of our commandos to fight guerrilla warfare behind enemy lines so we have time to build up our defensive fleets.

/ Acknowledged, Voting system activated. Commencing vote collection. Voting period will end in 3 hours./

â€|3 hours laterâ€|.

/ Voting has ended. Please cease sending in more votes. Calculating resultsâ€|.. 7.5 trillion in favour of sending commando squads on guerrilla warfareâ€|. 2.5 trillion not in favourâ€|.. 3 trillion abstainedâ€| policy has been approved. Thank you for using Official Chatroom. The Current Debate is now closed./

Author's Note: Hi all sorry for not updating this story for a long time I am currently busy with RL and may not have time to devote as much as I can to this story. Will update whenever I get the chance to

finish a chapter

26. Chapter 26

Athena Nebula, Tomaras System,

First Planet, Lusia

3 weeks after Relay Incident 314

Asari Dreadnought Luminous Fate

In Preparation to face invading Turian 3rd fleet

"Matriarch, we have lost contact with the sensor picket satellite around the Primary Mass Relay." a young Maiden reported. Ever since the official Declaration of war from the Turian and Salarian, the Asari Republic had been forced on the defensive. Ever so slowly the might of the Turian Hierarchy March on towards the core system of the Asari Republic. Even the criminal infested Omega Station was not spared, falling under the combined assault of the Turian's 5th Fleet.

"Ready the Fleet, inform Lusia Command. And pray that the Goddess protects us all." Replied the Matriarch grimly as she studies the position of Lusia defense fleet as well as the resupplying Asari 8th strike fleet. There was a burst of Static before the communication was established, "We have Lusia Command on the line Matriarch."

"Dreadnought Luminous Fate, this is Lusia Command. We are aware of the Situation, the last batch of refugee ships are evacuating to the Secondary Relay. 4th Battlegroup has been assigned to escort them back to Thessia." Came the controller in Lusia command. "Additionally the frigate Serenity will scout out the number of the invading forces."

"Acknowledge Lusia Command, Luminous Fate out." Replied the Matriarch as she grimly follow the scouting frigate's progress as it activate its sub drive and skirt to put the Primary Mass relay on the edge of its active sensor. Even so, another group of ship left orbit of Lusia and began to their long journey towards the secondary Relay on the other side of the solar system the ships blinking into FTL as soon as they reach the minimum safe distance.

It was not long before a large Data packet was transmitted to the Dreadnought. "Receiving data feed from the frigate Serenity, Estimate tonnage and number of enemy Vessels matched that of the Turian 3rd fleet. Reading multiple Dreadnought class vessels among them." Reported the analyst as she shifted through the received data. The hologram showing the tactical data suddenly flashed as it denoted an explosion. "Contact lost with Frigate Serenity!" shouted the communication officer. "Confirmed, Serenity has been destroyed." reported the Sensor operator. With a grim sigh, Matriarch Benelia T'Soni issued her orders: "Luminous Fate to all ship, form Battle lines in support of Orbital defense. Flanking frigates standby for flanking maneuvers. Bring weapons to full power and fire on my command."

There were a few brief flashes of light before the entire 3rd Turian fleet entered FTL and dropped right in perfect Military Battle position ready to overwhelm the Asari's defenses. Benezia spared the Turian Fleet a bitter glance before whispering "Fire." Multiple ships along the Asari's battle line fire their Mass effect cannons, launching multiple railgun slugs towards the Turian fleet.

Concentrated fire managed to knock out a few cruiser and a single Dreadnought before the Turians returned fire. "Multiple confirmed hits, 10 enemy cruiser destroyed, 5 disabled. A single enemy dreadnought destroyed, minor damage on the remaining. Enemy frigates moving in to knife fighting range. INCOMING ENEMY FIRE!" reported the sensor operator seconds before the return fire hammered the Asari's fleet. Multiple cruisers fell out of the line before their core detonated. A few just hung dead in space as Mass effect shell shattered their hulls and internal system leaving them dead in space. The Luminous Fate shudder slightly as multiple rounds slammed into its kinetic barriers. "Kinetic barriers at 60%! We lost 10% of the fleet!"

"Release the frigates, have half them engage the enemy frigate wolfpacks while the rest flank the enemy dreadnoughts. They are to fire all disruptor torpedoes when they are in range. All remaining ships focus fire on their cruisers take down as many of them as we can." Ordered Benezia as she grabbed hold of the railing. The Asari fleet did not hesitate to carry out her orders as the frigate line moved forward to engage massive 100 meters long ships engage in an intense dogfight while more of them slink at the edge of the fight heading towards the larger ships hidden behind the conflict zone. Noticing the approaching frigates, the Turian cruisers shifted their fire in an attempt to prevent them from swarming the dreadnoughts with partial success as multiple of the wolf pack was forced to disengage. A single wolfpack managed to penetrate the defense line, launching their torpedoes at close range at the closest dreadnought. 3 of the 5 frigates retreated but the other two were too damaged, without any hesitation changed course and charged the other dreadnought weapons firing. Their effort was for naught as the dreadnought brought it's side cannons to bear, its broadside tearing them to harmless debris that ping off its kinetic barrier.

"By the Goddess it's a slaughter out there." Whispered the communication Officer. Benezia spare a pitying glance to the young maiden before returning her attention to the battle. So far the battle was in the Asari's favor the guerrilla forced managed to severely damage this Turian fleet before they entered the system. However it was not to be as multiple slugs appeared to be fired from nowhere, revealing the hidden Salarian Stealth fleet that had snuck into position. Among them a dark and menacing looking stealth Dreadnaught firing it weapon with impunity at the Asari's flank. "Multiple casualty! We lost the entire right Flank! Orbital defenses are being taken apart! We won't last out here!" Even as Benezia consider the impossible position her fleet was stuck in, the remaining orbital defense turned to engage the Salarian fleet, their sensors attempted to track the hidden fleet with limited success as a few of their fire manage to hit and destroy a stealth cruiser. She grimaced slightly as a particularly nasty hit shook the Luminous Fate hard, rocking the Dreadnought. "Order the 1st cruiser squadron to coordinate fire with Orbital defense, bracket fire where the Salarian fleet is. By the goddess we will not let them take our colony without a fight!" Snapped Benezia as she reassert her calm and consider her options.

Her face however paled when the sensor operator reported "Multiple new contact! One of them is larger than a Dreadnought! They are firing!" She closed her eyes ready to accept her fate, however that fate did not come. "Impact! They struck the Turian fleet! Sensors confirming, it's the Destiny Ascension! Thank the Goddess!" Knowing they have been beaten, the Turian fleet slowly attempted to withdraw while the Salarian fleet simply disappeared from sensor leaving no trace that they even existed. Less than a minute silence fell over the survivors of the Asari defense fleet as the turian fleet vanish in flashes of light, retreating towards the Primary Mass relay. The silence was broken by the sensor officer who whispered "By the Goddess, Matriarch look at the Destiny!" sensor data was pulled up on the main screen, showing the familiar looking dreadnought. However it was not the same as large patches of its hull was replaced by a silvery metal that the spectrometer analyzed as dense but lightweight titanium alloy much stronger in quality than most armor used on any ship she has seen. "Open a channel." ordered Benezia as she watch the group of ships settled into defensive formation 700 kilometers out from her battle line. "Channel open Matriarch."

"This is Matriarch Benezia in command of the Lusia Defense fleet, we thank you for your assistance in driving off the assault fleet but we required identification. Our IFF has designated you as the battlegroup lost at Relay 314, however there seems to be many modification to the Destiny Ascension none of which are from her original design." Benezia was slightly skeptical that the battlegroup at Relay 314 had survive but here they were somewhat modified, her cautious side telling her to be wary till she can positively id the fleet. There was a crackle of static before the Bridge released the breath they have been holding. "This is Matriarch Lidanya in command of the Dreadnought Destiny Ascension, it's good to hear from you Lusia Defense Fleet, request permission to dock there is much we have to discuss. I am transmitting the recognition codes now." The communication console lit up as it recognized the incoming code, confirming the identification of the incoming fleet. "Identification codes received, Space dock 9 is ready to receive you." Replied Benezia as she fought to keep her emotion under control, hopeful to see her daughter alive and well with the fleet.

While the Destiny Ascension's battlegroup moved to dock, a small camera focused itself as it zoomed in on the defense fleet. Satisfied, the Prowler Port Stanley stealthily power up its engines before disappearing into a slipspace rupture leaving behind a small satellite probe to watch over the system.

Author Notes: And that's a wrap for this chapter. Enjoy and R&R.

27. Chapter 27

2564 January 10th

Epsilon Eridanus II, Planet Reach

Fort Whitecomb, Military Family Accommodations.

Silence reigned mostly in the darkened room, only the occasional breathing of the creature that currently resides in it. The same

could not be said for the connecting room but that did not bother the furry creature currently lying on the ground enjoying a nap. Suddenly its ears pricked up as it heard something of interest, and after several sniffing, a big furry tail starts wagging. A door open into the room, introducing natural light into the dark room, with a lunge the furry creature launch itself on the person who open the door, barking joyfully. "Uffff! Down boy, Thomas down!" laughed Commodore Alexia Sheppard as he try to extract himself from his family's German Sheppard's licking feast. With a slight tug, Lieutenant Hannah Sheppard managed to pull Thomas off her husband, in time to see two doors opening and two faces peeking out of them. "John, Jane we're home." Grinned Hannah as she keep a tight hold on Thomas's collar.

Both John and Jane rush out of their room and gave their parents hugs. Alexia and Hannah are rarely home especially when they are deployed on long duration patrol that are common even during peace time. Commodore Alexia Sheppard was in command of the 5th battlegroup of the Eridanus Defense Fleet, his flagship is an Autumn class Cruiser, The Willington, he had seen many space battles especially during the New Colonial Alliance uprising, which saw a short but bloody civil war that erupted between the UNSC and NCA. His wife, Hannah Sheppard served as the weapon officer of the Vindicator class light Battleship, Nemesis, usually assigned as a reaction force to any incursion into UNSC space in the Eridanus sector. Both have served in the navy for a minimum of 10 years with exemplary records. "How was the deployments this time round? Anything interesting?" asked John, Jane nodded in agreement with her older brother, interested in hearing their parents' recent venture into space.

Alexia and Hannah shared a glanced before Alexia replied "Not really much to talk about except a recent incursion from the Citadel Space, those bugger been slowly getting bolder and bolder we're seeing a higher increase in border probes Ever since all contact was lost with the Asari Republic." There was a small gasp from both teenagers before they asked "Were they wiped out?" Hannah shakes her head, "No, not that we are aware off. High Command has been getting edgy though, seems like something big is happening. We recently lost contact with one of our stealth satellite we left in the Tomaras System. A prowler is being sent to investigate a cause. But enough about what we done, how have you two been doing? Catching up in all your studies?" at this mention Jane nodded her head with a grin while a blush spread across John's face. Both teenagers enrolled in the Military Academy on Reach once they finished high schooling. "John, what's wrong?" asked Alexia as he noticed his son's embarrassment. "I got transferred to the Marine Officer School." Mumbled John as he decided to look upset slightly. Alexia raised an eyebrow before giving a hearty laugh. "A Ground Pounder and a jarhead at that! Well done John. Seems like someone finally got a Sheppard back in the marine Corp." grinned Hannah as she hug her son more. "How about you Jane? Where did the academy transfer you to?" Jane gave her brother a grin before replying "Naval Officer Academy". Both Parents looked absolutely delighted that their children have succeeded in graduating from Cadet School to Junior Officer School. Thus likely to continue the Sheppard family tradition of serving in the armed forces of humanity since the Rainforest Wars. After a few minutes of hectic unpacking, the entire family sat around the dinner table enjoying an afternoon meal.

"So John, I noticed you been studying a lot of the old ground warfare. Homework?" Asked Alexia as gave his son a wry smile. John gave a smile before shaking his head, his reply was cut short however when a beeping filled the room. Alexia gave a slight frown before pulling out his personal comm pad, "Alexis Sheppard here, to who am I talking to?" his expression changed from curiosity to grim as he listen closely to what the caller have to say. "Turn on Waypoint?" asked Alexia before he went over to turn on his TV and connect to the UEG's main information network, Waypoint, on it was a news reporting of sudden loss of a civilian convoy from Eden Prime. "Thank you, we'll be leaving soon. Private" with that he turned off his comm pad and looked straight at Hannah. "We been recalled, something serious has happened at Eden Prime and HighCom is setting the armed forces at Defcon 2. Seems like ONI lost a few of their special freighters to an unknown force. Always like those bugger to mix their delivery freights with civilian. And now they are in a panic over their loss."

"What were they carrying to cause ONI such a panic, Dad?" asked Jane as she continue to look at the screen of the News broadcast. "I don't know, but knowing ONI's usual cloak and dagger it can't be good. Hannah let's get ready, we'll be leaving in a few hours." Hannah nodded her agreement before heading back to their room to pack their luggage. "And you two, keep studying hard. We'll see you both when we get back." Said Alexia as he turn towards his kids. A slight smile tug at the corner of his mouth when both his children gave crisp military salutes before hugging tightly.

2564 January 17th

Utopia System, Eden Prime.

Epsilon Defense Station, in geosynchronous Orbit.

There was a dull monotonous beeping as the station's computer runs through the data it receives constantly from its extensive sensor arrays, mostly scanning the coming and going of the freighters. The station itself while relatively new is part of a 5 station defense grid network that currently protects the new agricultural colony to the UNSC. In a throwback to the old days, each station was designed based of the MAC stations used during the human Covenant war with slight improvements, while their main primary power supply is still drawn from surface, each station now retains their own secondary Fusion reactors that provide a backup in case the ground generator fails. "Sir we're picking up something on long range scanners. Nothing solid yet just sensor echoes." Reported the sensor officer as he look through the return data from the sensors. The Station commander gave a slight "Hmm" before tapping commands into his personal comm pad, half a minute later a flight of broadsword interceptors launched to investigate the source of the echoes. Halfway there, suddenly collision alarms sounded throughout the station causing the station commander to drop his comm pad. Swearing, he stopped down to pick up the device as he demanded a report: "Goddamn it sensor, what the hell is going on?"

The Sensor officer frantically look through the incoming data trying to determine the exact cause. After a few seconds of reading "Sensors are reporting three corvette mass object approaching at superluminal speed in real space sir! They are all on a collision course! Estimate of impact in 20 seconds!"

The commander was slightly shocked but his training quickly snapped him back into reality, "Nav engage the maneuvering thrusters, I dun care if we burn them out get us out of their position! Weapons target the predicted path of the objects and fire at will. Comm, send out a distress signal now! Warn High com that Eden Prime is being invaded." Each of the officers quickly snapped to their duties while the Broadswords interceptors begin to turn around having received the automated update to their tactical data. 5 seconds later the MAC station shuddered as it launch a 2000 ton projectile right in the path of one of the object, the projectile impacting the object just as it reach the point of interception.

"Direct hit on Object 1, Reorienting for target 2!" reported the weapon officer as she started to calculate the vector needed to hit the second target. Five seconds later the station fires again however this time the massive slug missed its target sailing harmlessly into deep space. "Damn it, target has engaged evasive. Sir I cann't guaranteed we will be able to take them out in time." Reported the weapon officer grimly as she prepare the station to launch another round.

The Commander gave a grim nod before activating the station intercom system, "All hands this is the commander, all non-essential personals are to evacuate, Marine contingents Alpha to Charlie report to the lifepods. Delta report to the bridge, Get it done people." With that done, the commander look over his command crew, pride glimmering in his eyes. "If we don't survive this, know that it's been an honor serving with you. Weapons, arm everything we got, I don't care if the target are not in range yet. Fire a full spread all across their trajectory. Let's see those bastard get pass this." The weapon officer nodded and carried out her orders engaging the stations missile pods and point defense weaponry throw out a blanket of weapon fire each weaponry firing as fast as their automated reload system could cycle. A few seconds ticked by before a series of explosions dotted a line to the station before a blue tinged explosion detonated along the path to the station. The commander gave another grim smile before ordering the rest of his crew to the life boat connected to the command section. Taking a last moment to set the station to self-destruct he quickly ran to the last life pod waiting for him. However seconds before he could enter the life pod, the station detonated as a Turian Frigate slammed into station at FTL speed its mass effect core going critical from the non-stop FTL jumps. The other lifeboats that were launched earlier were flung around like toys when the station's inbuilt reactor went critical, a few managed to regain control and resume course towards the planet while others were sadly dead in space.

All this while, the battle was carefully watch and orchestrated aboard the flagship of the Turian First fleet. General Septimus Oraka nodded in satisfaction as he watch the lingering explosion of the station. "Using the unmanned ships on board VI to plot FTL straight into the enemy stations was brilliant. All ships move in begin landing operation. Comms send my compliments to Saren, and that he is free to go." After taking one more look at the Garden world, he growled out "Soon the Galaxy will once more know the might of the Turian Hierarchy."

Author Notes: Finally done, been way too hectic to update with all the schoolwork I have to deal with. Enjoy and review.

End
file.